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A VICAR'S VIEW  
OF  
CHURCH PATRONAGE

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*J. GODSON*



A VICAR'S VIEW  
OF  
CHURCH PATRONAGE

BY THE REV.

**J. Godson, M.A.**

VICAR OF ASHBY FOLVILLE, LEICESTERSHIRE

RIVINGTONS  
London, Oxford, and Cambridge

1875

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## RIVINGTONS

<b>London</b>	. . . . .	<i>Waterloo Place.</i>
<b>Oxford</b>	. . . . .	<i>High Street.</i>
<b>Cambridge</b>	. . . . .	<i>Trinity Street.</i>

## *INTRODUCTION*

**N**O subject connected with the Church of England requires more careful consideration than her system of Patronage. All thoughtful Churchmen who watch the signs of the times, and know the requirements of the Church and nation, are solicitous that some wise and effective measure of reform should be passed by Parliament as speedily as possible.

The Bishop of Peterborough's bill has drawn attention to the subject, but it still requires ventilating that it may be better understood by the public, and a more general interest may be excited in it. The writer of the following pages commits them to the press in the hope that they may in some slight measure contribute to this result, and conduce to an equitable settlement of that which he regards as of the utmost importance to the future welfare of the Church of England.



## A Vicar's View of Church Patronage.

### PART I.

#### *The Position of the Patron.*

§ 1. CHURCH Patronage is one of the subjects at present engaging the attention of Parliament, and often very prominent in the public mind. So no doubt the public generally will regard with interest any trustworthy information on this important and yet little understood subject.

Besides the origin and position of the patrons of the Church benefices, two other interesting branches of the subject might be discussed, viz.—the effect of the Patronage system on the clergy; and also, its relation to the laity.

With regard to Church patrons; they are the direct successors in power of the original founders and givers of the endowments of the Church, having a prescriptive right to nominate to the Church benefices, which are said to number about eleven or twelve thousand.

It is calculated that about one half of the Church livings is in the hands of official patrons; that is to say, the Lord Chancellor, the bishops, and others, hold them by virtue of their office. The other half



is in the hands of private patrons, whom the law recognises to have in them a property right, as well as a spiritual trust.

To ascertain whether it is just and fair that such a right should be allowed, a glance at the original endower's position is rendered needful. The motive, ruling thought, and argument in the minds of the founders and first patrons, no doubt, was somewhat as follows: They regarded their estates as justly chargeable from year to year with the maintenance of a clergyman. Allowing this, they thought it could matter little in the end if they (on the part of themselves and their heirs) discharged the duty of the estate for ever by giving up land, etc., for a permanent endowment, forasmuch as the nomination to the benefice could be secured to them and their heirs in perpetuity.

It is well known that our parishes and the estate of the ancient endower are commonly co-extensive with each other.<sup>1</sup> Through the commencement of a patronage system, he who before was rather the chaplain and stipendiary to the hall became the permanent and endowed priest for the parish.

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<sup>1</sup> The owner and giver of landed property and tithes made by them spiritual provision for all the people living on his property. A parish was frequently of the same extent as an estate; so that the clergyman was chaplain to the landlord and to all the people living within his boundaries. From such an arrangement great diversities must have arisen, for some estates were large and valuable, whilst others were small

The following important and *true* representation is to be found in a publication of the British Anti-State Church Association, now, the Liberation Society.

“In process of time there crept in the endowment of parochial churches, which was not done (says the learned author of the *Origines Ecclesiasticæ*) in all places and at the same time, in one and the same way ; but it seems to have had its rise from particular founders of churches, who settled manse and glebe upon them, and upon that score were allowed a right of patronage, to present their own clerk and invest him with the revenue wherewith they had endowed it.”<sup>1</sup>

The action of the old endowers and builders of our parish churches was the outcome of a principle of

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and perhaps more thinly peopled. The question of patronage is easily explained, when we know the historical facts. The person who granted the tithes, or otherwise founded an endowment, appointed the minister from age to age. The people paid nothing, but received the full benefit of a resident clergyman provided by the property of a patron.

In the course of time estates changed hands. Sometimes the purchaser succeeded to the full possession of what his predecessor had enjoyed ; whilst at other times the title of ownership of the property, representing nine-tenths of its value, was sold to one, and the right to appoint the clergyman, representing one-tenth, was sold to another. This arrangement, having its origin in the early history of our Church, prevails everywhere at the present day. A landlord may have the patronage in one parish, a bishop in the next, and a stranger to the locality, who may have succeeded to the rights of another, may enjoy the patronage of the next.

So wise and useful is the parochial system, adopted in the early ages of the Church, that even with all our experience and enlightenment at the present day we cannot improve upon it ; and all that there is left us to do is to carry out, in all its spirit and entirety, a system so wise, so practical, and so comprehensive. In the tenth century Church property became a recognised legal possession, and Church privileges became a settled right enjoyed by all parishioners.—Rev. R. R. MOORE.

<sup>1</sup> See page 77 of their tract, *Church Patronage*.

profound wisdom as well as of noble generosity and godly zeal. And in the numerous new churches and endowments which in late years have everywhere been made over to us, we see modern justification of the wisdom of our ancestors.

The writer would remark in passing upon the remarkable proof here afforded as to the good of a good government. It will be conceded that a main function of a national government is to secure throughout the nation to all its owners the peaceable possession of their property. It is owing, in no small degree, to there being little confidence in the kingdom as to the security of property (not only from its violent seizure by lawless men, but from confiscation by government officials), that Turkey is so poor and miserable; so in great measure for the opposite reason England is rich and prosperous. For centuries the Government of our country has had just principles, and has properly fulfilled its functions as universal guardian. Hence if a hospital or school was built and endowed years ago, up to this moment no one has disturbed the trustees in possession. In the course of years, by the exercise of private beneficence, the number of such institutions has been increased until the country has become covered with them. So likewise, without there being any preconcerted scheme pious founders, by a very gradual process, have furnished the kingdom with churches and endow-

ments. They would not have done so had there not been confidence that Government would act as it has acted, viz. would extend to them the protection which they have a right to claim, and which it is the duty of Government to grant.

Formerly, when there was very little wealth in the country (there being hardly any form of "real property" besides land), and when an undue proportion of the land was owned by the churches and monasteries, clauses were inserted in the oaths of kings and in charters, e. g. Magna Charta, solemnly asserting and reasserting to the Church of England full security for her property, and the most rapacious kings restrained their liberationist tendencies.

It will help to elucidate our subject and clear away misconception with respect to the origin of our churches, to state briefly the two cases—that of the Church of England and that of Scotland; for the history of Church endowments and patronage in Scotland differs in a marked manner from ours. The Scotch Church was not spontaneously, i. e. voluntarily, endowed by the nobles and gentry; but the State, through the influence of John Knox, put a permanent annual charge for ministerial as well as school purposes upon the lands of a parish, and in return gave the heritors or landowners collectively the power and right of appointing the parish clergyman. But no law was ever placed on our Statute Book requiring

the lords of the soil to build churches and provide the burial grounds and glebes now to be found in every parish. Historical research makes clear what has already been intimated, viz. that they were a free gift to the different churches, made at different times by many different persons, e.g. lords of manors and merchants, kings and nobles.<sup>1</sup> When the law interposed it was not to found churches, but simply to secure to the Church property already given. Much confusion of thought might be avoided were it generally known how loosely and incorrectly such terms as "Church property," "Established Church," are commonly used, and how different the true meaning belonging to them is from the meaning usually conveyed.

The term Church property has been so used, that the idea it commonly conveys is that there is a vast corporation owning all the property which earnest Churchmen years ago gave for the benefit of the

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<sup>1</sup> There is a prevalent feeling abroad, though a very erroneous one, that our Church is opposed to voluntaryism ; that while voluntary gifts are the great characteristic of Dissent, endowments given by the State are the prominent feature of the Church of England. Unhappily, this is far from correct ; for whatever benefit the State receives from the Church, there is no return whatever, either in the shape of annual money grants, or of permanent endowments. Our Church has her own property, as has any other Church or sect ; and whatever she has consists of the voluntary gifts of her own children, in ages when Christian liberality was better understood, and when the duty of giving a stated portion of one's property to the cause of religion was seriously felt and duly practised.—Rev. R. R. MOORE.

Church in many different localities, and which therefore belongs to several local churches. The Church of England is a federation of many ecclesiastical and separate corporations both "sole" and aggregate, that is, bishops, chapters, rectors, and vicars. The Church of England as a separate body has no property. It belongs to the church of Canterbury, the church of Lincoln, the church of each of the various little parishes throughout the country.<sup>1</sup>

It cannot be too strongly impressed that the property attached to parish churches, whether land or *tithe*, was originally assigned by voluntary donation from the lords of the soil to the rectors and vicars; the State not being consulted about, nor directly concerned with, the benefaction.

"Tithe," says Mr Hallam, "had its origin in the piety of the landlord. It was recommended and enjoined by the authorities (or ministers) of *the Church* (in sermons), in imitation of the Jewish law; it was enforced as a conscientious duty by the Church, *not by the State*; in the canons of Church councils,

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<sup>1</sup> The act of transfer of property by pious individuals was very solemn. They took a twig, or turf, which represented land, a part of its produce representing the whole. A piece of wood or lump of clay represented a house; a key, knife, piece of iron, or lock of hair represented a church. And when these things were given to promote the glory of God and religious purposes the above-named emblems were taken into the church, solemnly deposited on the altar, and there in the presence of witnesses every gift which was made to the Church was consecrated to God.

*not* by the civil statutes of the realm. Tithes, after the parochial system was introduced, were regarded as the property of those to whom they were assigned in the first instance by the donors ; if a clergyman or cathedral received such donations it was not through any State law, but by charter (equivalent to *deed poll*) and *always* as a voluntary gift.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to the phrase Established Church, this is a modern and by no means felicitous term, though adopted and I believe brought into currency by the Registrar General in the forms he supplies for the entry of marriages.

The true position of the Church with respect to the State is a point of importance bearing directly on the present inquiry.

In relationship to the Church of Scotland, the State acted in all respects as its founder. Being deeply convinced of the importance of religion to the national welfare, and penetrated by a sense of its own duty to promote the religious instruction of the people, and to provide means for the exercise of religious worship, the State may be said to have entered into a sort of bargain with the Church as the proper instrument to effect these objects, and (pledging itself to do the bidding of the State) the Scotch

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<sup>1</sup> See Rev. Dr. MASSINGHAM's pamphlet (Macintosh, London, 2d.), *Tithes*. It is a masterly investigation of a difficult but yet very interesting subject.

Church received means to effectually carry out its pledges, viz. endowments and special privileges. Historical warrant for the idea that a similar compact was ever entered into between the State and the English Church is wholly wanting, and all lawyers know there never was a time when the nation or its rulers made up their minds that it would be a good thing to set up in this country an established Church, any more than there was a moment when it was determined to set up a mixed government of king, lords, and commons. Notwithstanding, it is constantly being inculcated that the Church was established in the manner of the Scotch Church, by Parliament ; but only the altogether uninstructed can be thus misled.

The convenience of retaining the term in question merely to express the Church of the country, as distinguished from sectaries, is so small as not to counterbalance the wrong it does by conveying a false impression ; however, we cannot dismiss it, and so we should circulate clear knowledge with respect to it. The truest sense in which the Church of England is established is in being able to support herself. She neither owes her existence in the first place, nor her continuance afterwards, to State favour. It follows that the only kind of control that the State can properly exercise over the Church of England's funds is precisely that which, through the Charity Commis-



sioners, she exercises over the multitude of charity trusts which are scattered over the kingdom, viz. a just interference from time to time to prevent the perversion of these funds from their proper use; time so alters circumstances that this interference is just and *necessary* to secure the fulfilment of the testators' intentions.

Whatever may be the nature of the connection of the Church and State in other countries, with respect to that of England no less an authority than Sir Robert Phillimore has remarked—"There is no kingdom in whose history the independence of the national Church is written with a firmer character in the statutes of the realm, in the decisions of judicial tribunals, and the debates of Parliament."

§ 2. Enough has now been said to set forward the private origin, and consequent right of independence, of the Episcopal Church of England.

The direct successors and representatives of the ancient founders are the present patrons. And clearly it is wrong to regard their position as one of aristocratic privilege, opposed to popular right, obtained by force or fraud in days of ignorance and oppression now gone by. For it is rather an advantage and power obtained by riches benevolently bestowed and gratefully accepted.

From this it follows—(1) That the exercise of his spiritual trust by the patron should be respected. (2)

That the property right of patrons in their livings should be held sacred. This remark I think needful, because it is possible that by new legislation they might be so hampered and restricted in the exercise of their prerogative, that what now is valued at ten or twelve years' purchase would not be worth one year's. The law of 1843 (which gave a vetoing power to the parishioners of Scotland) thus seriously affected the patrons of the Church of Scotland. Nothing would justify such arbitrary interference in the Church of England.

It is customary with some to regard the purchase and sale of livings as scandalous ; and therefore the question is important, viz. whether it is morally right thus to transfer Church livings. Some way there must be by which to facilitate their transfer, and to prevent their being in unfit hands (which occasionally would happen, for the richest families are sometimes reduced to great poverty). Then again a purchaser surely may make as good a choice as one to whom the right of fixing upon a clergyman and presenting to a vacant living has come by heirship. Whoever buys an advowson generally does so because he feels interested in Church matters.

The late Francis Wright, Esq., of Osmaston Manor, Derbyshire, a wealthy, large-hearted and most benevolent man, bought several livings, and it is well-known how afterwards he became a great benefactor

to them. Very much could be said in favour of lay patronage. How then can this door of purchase—the only way by which a layman may become seized and possessed of the right of exercising patronage—be closed? And if advowsons may be bought, which it is for the public advantage they should be, then they may equally be sold, unless indeed we make Church patronage a kind of Cacus den, to which the footsteps all lead one way; what layman will buy a right which he may not afterwards sell?

When the spiritual trust is passed from one person to another, the endowment is also transferred, the former goes with the latter; but it is the latter, i. e. the endowment, which regulates the price and money value of the living. The chairman of the Liberation Society, with a view to make capital for the society, has depicted with great cleverness an actual sale of a Church living by an auctioneer. It was represented that the people were bid for and sold at the sale; and hoping to elicit a response of virtuous indignation, the narrator wound up his story by the remark—"Here you have the spirit of the slave trade." Now the Liberation Society is not ignorant of the fact that property on these occasions is changing hands. They have the most exaggerated view of the value of that property, yet on this occasion it suited the speaker to keep out of sight all knowledge as to the fact, and the value of the property then changing hands. The

clergy, as a class, are richer and better off than Dissenting ministers. Our enemies envy us this advantage ; and our social standing and incomes, if truth be spoken, are the real occasion of their grievance, "the head and front of our offending." The Liberation Society is at length frank enough to proclaim that it has a design upon our endowments. Great, therefore, is its displeasure whenever it contemplates our absolute right to them. Buying and selling necessarily imply an absolute and just right.

It may throw light upon the difficult point that has been raised, if we set forward two cases as nearly parallel as may be.

Suppose then a Dissenting merchant or manufacturer is rich, and dies, leaving his property between two sons. One of them determines to carry on his father's business ; the other, preferring to be a minister, receives only five per cent. interest on his capital lent to his brother. As a minister he has to forego the great profits made in trade. The world knows that he is in a manner practising self-denial. And it loves to praise such a man's conduct.

Now clergymen frequently receive half or three-quarters of their income from their living as *interest* (from their capital being invested in the living), which capital, were it worked in trade for them or by them, would yield greater profit. And, indeed, were no livings to be bought, their patrimony, invested well

elsewhere, would raise them socially and as a class above Dissenting ministers, who mostly live on their professions.

Though it is seldom acknowledged in the case of the clergyman, in both cases the people enjoy the advantage of almost gratuitous ministrations, and are equally gainers provided their ministers are fit and qualified. This in the clergyman's case is secured, it is presumed, by the tests the bishop has applied.

The transfer of advowsons or fee-simple of livings is absolutely necessary, and it seems as right as it is convenient that this be done by purchase and sale ; but as much cannot be said with respect to the sale of next presentations. Instances might be cited when such sales have had a good result. But in such cases no thanks whatever are due to the patron, who, instead of guarding and blessing the parish by carefully selecting a suitable minister for it, as was his duty, retained the responsibility, and signed over his conscientious approval of the arbitrary appointment of one who had paid him sufficiently for this privilege. Neither a poor nor covetous man is fit to be trustee for valuable property, owing to his liability to give way to temptations to make gain out of his trust. On this account how wrong it is that Church livings can by law be *entailed*. Patrons who are in great need have nothing to excuse their base conduct in selling their appointment, because they can discharge their con-

sciences from responsibility by transferring the living, i. e. both the property and trust, to another. But when the living is entailed in a family wanting money, such are the facilities for selling a next presentation, that there is every temptation to violate the sacred trust it involves. The Bishop of Peterborough, April 21st, in his exhaustive speech in the House of Lords, when moving for a select committee to inquire into the law on Church Patronage, made use of this indignant language : " Though bound before God and man to find the fittest pastor for the parish, the patron who thus parts with his appointment deliberately and for lucre of gain chooses a man careless as to whether he is fit or unfit." Unquestionably it is the duty of every one who has the right of appointment to a sacred office to use that trust conscientiously, with a single eye to the general good and the reward of particular merit.

Patrons do not always seek meritorious and efficient clergymen for their appointments ;} but cases of abuse of trust by their presenting unfit men become daily less common, the public and private conscience being much more awake than it was to responsibility in the matter of spiritual appointments. And it is to be hoped, if legal restraint be not thought requisite, that patrons will more and more hesitate before incurring the guilt of such mercenary default of duty as is involved in selling a next presentation.

It would be a wholesome check upon all patrons, in the way of preventing them from exercising their power without due regard for the spiritual interests of the people, were every patron required to publish, in one or two of the newspapers, the grounds upon which his appointment was made, and as a penalty, if mercenary conduct and an abuse of trust were afterwards discovered, it might be advantageously enacted that the trust and patronage should be wholly forfeited, as corrupt boroughs are disfranchised, the money he had received being considered as a sufficient acknowledgment or requital for the property right taken from him. The living should then be sold, and the proceeds go to its augmentation.

A stringent law to this effect might be the means of doing, *indirectly*, a large amount of good. For it would increase the number of vacancies, and cause a more certain promotion of meritorious clergy as they attain sufficient standing. And curates would work with increased zeal and energy through having before them a fair prospect of reward.

§ 3. There can be no question that the law regulating the transfer of patronage needs some amendment. Great difficulties, however, beset the subject. This may be gathered by comparing the earlier *draft* Report of the Patronage Committee of the House of Lords with the Report they finally agreed upon. Much hesitation and diffidence prevailed in the minds of the

Committee as to what recommendations should be made, or these would not have been so greatly altered. In the first Report it was recommended that advowsons should not be resaleable for five years, and that the sale of next presentations, apart from advowsons, be forbidden by law. But the amended Report is very different. They finally resolved not to touch lay patrons, not even to the extent of prohibiting them from making a profit, at the expense of their conscience, by selling "next presentations." But clerical patrons are treated with decisive rigour: the Committee recommend that an obsolete statute of the time of Queen Anne be revived, with a view to "prevent the presentation (after the next vacancy) of any clerk who has purchased an advowson, either directly or through a trustee, to the benefice of which the advowson has been so purchased."

If this recommendation be acted upon, the only thing which to a large class of men makes the Church an open profession will be denied. Every curate without *influence*, who has not the good fortune to be placed at the time of a vacancy in the neighbourhood of a beneficent patron (having himself no deserving clerical relative or connection or friend to promote) can never emerge from the inferior position of a curate to the independent one of an incumbent. And so it frequently happens that a clergyman having efficiency, zeal, learning, and piety, coupled with years of ex-



perience, has to be content with the same status and stipend as a youth just ordained and fresh from a theological college. The position of curates is sufficiently disheartening, without their being deprived of the reasonable hope of advancing themselves in their profession by means of purchase when, after long waiting, they have not obtained any preferment. The door of purchase, now open, ought to be left open for such men.

At present many meritorious curates, when between forty and fifty, and justly anxious for a post of usefulness and permanence, find they have no chance of preferment from others, and more than this, that their eligibility for desirable curacies has become lessened in the eyes of many incumbents by the maturity of their years, experience, and opinions—even perhaps by their independence of means—the very circumstances which seem to make them eligible for a living.

The Bishop of Lincoln holds the opinion that as there are 7000 benefices in the hands of private patrons, they are sufficient, if *bestowed impartially*, for every praiseworthy curate of eleven or twelve years' standing to be promoted to one. Would that a result so devoutly to be desired could in any way be secured! But were patrons to be ever so impartial, the Bishop's theory could not be realised, for the reason contained in the reply of a poor widow with a large family, to

one who told her God never sent mouths without sending bread to fill them. The reply was, "But, then, the bread is in one place and the mouths in another." How could it be ensured for every praiseworthy curate when of ten or eleven years' standing, that he would be at hand or would become known to a patron having a living to bestow? We know that curates are mostly in large towns, and patrons mostly in pleasant residences in the country. The Bishop's ideal state of blessedness will not be realised until a law be passed requiring all young curates to stand by till old ones are become beneficed.

If the law relating to patronage be altered, and the right they at present possess of gaining for themselves a recognised position for the exercise of their profession be denied to these clergy, it will act with great unfairness and hardship towards them, and be a loss and disadvantage to the class in society to which they belong. The great middle class may be said to have sprung into existence since Queen Anne's reign, and it has now acquired a very large interest in the *national* Church, so called—(1) From her extending her parochial system all over the country. (2) From her including the largest portion of the population within her pale. (3) From *all* classes contributing to supply her ministry. Lastly, from all classes having their share in her patronage. The middle class is justly considered the mainstay of the nation as regards

sound judgment and healthiness of religious feeling ; besides this, being the most comprehensive and extensive, it now possesses most political influence. All things considered, it is surely best that this class should continue to hold the largest number of Church livings and greatest material reasons for retaining its attachment to the Church.

The proposal of the Lords' Select Committee would soon entirely alter the basis upon which our patronage system now stands ; this at present *is as broad as the nation*. Let it be narrowed down, as it must be under the measure proposed, there will be a real danger of the Church being moulded and made to reflect the views of *one class* in society.

Such a regulation as is proposed would effectually eliminate from the Church's system a large number of the middle class clergy ; and the patronage now thus held would become absorbed by, and go to augment the power and consequence of, a few men of the highest rank and greatest wealth, whose connections, or, rather, adherents and dependents, taking holy orders, will then hold this preferment, and most probably the poorest class of clergy (always contented to risk the never getting beyond curates) will chiefly fill up the place now occupied by representatives of the upper end and the middle of the middle class. We ought not to keep out of the Church such men ; rather should we heartily welcome them to her ranks.

The Select Committee of the House of Lords has wisely expressed a belief in the value of existing varieties of patronage. "They were persuaded that to this variety the Church owes much of that large breadth of opinion and freedom and independence of thought on the part of the clergy, which are desirable and even essential to her position as a national Church.

The Bishop of Lincoln has publicly expressed the desire "that some plan could be devised by which the patronage of all livings not attached to estates could be placed in the hands of some public patron or patrons, who would dispense them for the public good ; such an act would be worthy the achievement of a great nation," etc. The desire here expressed to do away with private patronage, except in those cases where the local squire happens to be patron, deserves a special notice. The Bishop wishes to transfer the trust now committed to private hands to diocesan officials, e. g. to the bishop or a diocesan board. Such a measure would affect a multitude of Church livings, and it would be such an infringement of the right derived originally from their endowment, and so at variance with all law and equity, as to be quite unjustifiable, *unless* an abuse of the trust which accompanies the patron's right be alleged. It may be right and just that patrons should be dealt with by law, but they should first be proved a hindrance and a failure, or at

least it should be shown that superior advantages will very probably be derived from the substituted method. To tear up by the roots a main part of our old Church system, which has grown up with it from the beginning and become a part of its very being, strikes one immediately as being a dangerous thing to do ; and unless it can be clearly shown that some decided improvement would be gained, the danger involved by the change had better not be incurred. Surely it would be wise, before committing ourselves to a tremendous and hazardous experiment, to wait and see how it works in the Church of Ireland, where patronage boards have lately been adopted.

The old cathedral chapters are a sort of diocesan patronage board, which not unfrequently are conducted on private patronage principles, their appointments being given to the dean and canons to bestow separately and by rotation. It is possible, therefore, that after immense sums had been spent to carry out Dr. Wordsworth's idea, we should be practically just where we were before.

There is a natural tendency in boards, as in official and private patrons, to lose their fear of public criticism and their keen sense of responsibility, and to give their appointments to private friends.

Advowsons appendant, that is, such as are attached to a manor or land, are specially excepted by the Bishop. These are generally in the hands of resident

squires. It is not easy to see how the public good will be more secure in their hands than in those of other private patrons. The rhyme which has such stinging force against the voluntary system—

“The pulpit’s patrons  
The pulpit’s laws do give;  
And they who preach for pay  
Must preach to live,”

holds good in a manner against the appointments of local squires. The nominee of a squire does not, it is true, depend upon the caprice of a patron for the permanence of his position, but the fact of his having received a substantial benefit will surely influence such a clergyman (which influence is naturally exercised in the patron’s favour). If the squire’s conduct is everything it should be, this is well enough; but suppose him capable of unjustifiable follies, rather than merely harmless foibles, in the clergyman’s mind inclination will have a hard fight against conscience, and probably in the end prevent a proper discharge of his duty. The Bishop of Lincoln should point out how the spiritual interests of a parish, placed under these circumstances, can be said to be particularly well provided for. With regard to the other side of the matter—the squire’s performance of his chief duty as patron—is not a squire patron strongly tempted to nepotism, specially if he be poor, with several sons? To such a one the family living seems as natural a provision for a younger

son (whether fit or unfit) as the estate is for the eldest. Again I ask, is this for the public good ?

An attempt to carry out the Bishop of Lincoln's idea with respect to diocesan boards would be to alter entirely the constitution of the Church, as difficult and dangerous an experiment as the renewing of an old house. You cannot tell where it may end, or what it may end in. The result arrived at might not be the establishment of such boards, or a universal and beneficial reign of bishops and local squires, but just the reverse of this, viz. popular elections, each parish clamouring for and obtaining the power to elect for itself, as has lately been allowed by Parliament in the Church of Scotland.

A wise regulation of the sale of advowsons cannot be effected without much care and caution. At present, as we have seen, a clergyman is allowed to present himself to a living of which he has become patron ; and morally there is little difference between the case of a man who can bring powerful influence to bear upon a patron, and that of him whose appointment is gained by another power at his command—viz., money. In this case half the proceeds of a small living is in reality the return for an investment of capital, and the clergyman who holds it is financially only on a par with a brother clergyman whose income is from a curacy, augmented by the proceeds of a few thousands in railway shares, except that the latter lacks the advantage and social

comfort of a settled home and defined sphere ; which advantage, being obtainable in other professions by those who have means at their command, should be allowed in this also. If such a clergyman be a fit man, and contented to receive only 130*l.* or 140*l.* a year *as remuneration for his services*, no one else need complain.

Sensitive Christian men are sometimes scandalised as they glance down the columns of a newspaper by seeing the advertisements for the sale of Church livings. It is the worldly way in which these advertisements are tricked out which occasions offence, and naturally gives rise to a suspicion that they are bought as well as sold from entirely worldly motives ; yet it is hardly fair that the buyers should be held responsible for the low motives often so offensively suggested by the property agents' advertisements.

The creation of diocesan register offices for the transfer of livings will tend to remedy this evil.<sup>1</sup>

Let it be always remembered that patronage is a necessary concomitant of endowments, and the old parochial system we have inherited. Our parish churches have all along had property whereby to maintain a minister derived from one who has always a living direct representative with just claims to nominate to them ; claims he has either obtained by

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<sup>1</sup> Auction sales are simply a scandal and disgrace to the Church.



inheritance, or possesses through a compensating payment.

The writer comes to the conclusion, that as imperfections and objections may be urged against the exclusive adoption of any particular system of patronage, the plan now in operation, comprehending every kind, is upon the whole the best. So diverse a system, including Government and ecclesiastical nominations, appointments by colleges, trustees, and private individuals of all ranks of society, and a few by parish election, may be considered the best that could be devised by human wisdom for a national Church, provided it be duly regulated in some such way as will shortly be proposed.

## PART II.

### *The Position of the Clergy.*

§ 4. **P**ATRONAGE may be properly regarded as the key of the position of the Church. The relationship existing between the patrons and their livings is by no means the whole of the matter. It is directly connected with the maintenance and comfort of the clergy; the localities in which they are placed for work; and in fact with the amount of good which is, and also which might be, effected by means of the Episcopal English Church.

“The prosperity of the Church” means the prosperity of the great body that forms the Church, viz. the people. But let it be recognised that the clergy form a most important item in the Church, whose prosperity requires their welfare to be well considered. The due maintenance of the clergy has always been a source of anxiety and matter of difficulty; and on account of its necessity the value of any Church system may be to some extent tried by it. At least any system not adequately providing for its ministers is defective, since an underpaid clergy implies men of inferior stamp and poor education.

The clergy of our national Church have always

been, more or less, a learned body, and at no period have their general attainments and professional education been more than sufficient for the due discharge of their duties ; but if ever the Church needed learned men and effective speakers in her service, it is surely in this present age of inquiry, enlightenment, and progress.

The Gospel has to be incessantly preached, the faith has to be defended against the assaults of the sceptic ; the intelligent working man has to be interested and influenced for good ; Church rights and Church principles must be maintained against the attacks of the political Dissenter. Then, also, the aristocracy, the men of wealth, the intelligent and educated middle classes, necessarily require an intelligent and highly educated ministry.

Further, a system which does not administer or officer our parishes suitably is inefficient, and requires rectification ; clearly it is a bad distribution of forces for clergy to be most plentiful where people are few in number, and scarce where the people are very numerous. Again, it is a wrong allocation of forces for men of poor abilities to be placed where great and eminent talent is wanted, while at the same time much available talent has no proper field for its exercise. These are evils calculated to affect very injuriously both the country at large and the Church as a corporate body, for there cannot be waste without loss, or inefficiency without damage. High importance

must therefore be attached to a good distribution and allocation of the clergy. This, however, is second in importance to their being earnest and professionally efficient men.

What answer can be given to the question whether our present system secures these things for the country? And, first and most important, are the clergy upon the whole fit and zealous men? Mr. Gladstone recently bore testimony in the House of Commons to the high character of the clergy; for he said that within his remembrance an astonishing transformation had taken place; for instead of their being, as he remembered them to be, worldly-minded men, not conforming by their practice to the standard of their high office, seeking to accumulate preferments with reckless indifference, and careless of the cure of souls committed to their charge, and, upon the whole, continually declining in moral influence, . . . it is now almost a moral certainty that when you go into any parish you will find the clergyman a man who works to the best of his ability, little sparing of his health and strength, spending morning, noon, and night upon the work of his calling: teaching the young, visiting the sick, preaching the Word, and conforming as far as he can to the model his Master left for him to follow. It is a matter for congratulation and great thankfulness that such an eulogy as this could be truthfully spoken. God has awakened our Church and quickened our ministers to a sense of their

high trust, and it may be safely asserted that at this moment the Church of England possesses a body of clergy which, viewed as a whole, are as learned, as faithful, and as devoted as the ministers of any Church in the world.<sup>1</sup>

It has already been intimated that the distribution of the clergy over the country is unsatisfactory, not being in due relation to its requirements. This will be shown by the figures of the following simple statement: "In the pleasant southern dioceses, with which our educated gentry are best acquainted, there is no lack of clergy; for to six millions of population in the nine southern dioceses we have a little over 7000 clergy, while in the six northern ones, with considerably over eight millions of population, we

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<sup>1</sup> The interests of our country require that we should have at heart the maintenance of that high clerical type which no other Church has ever developed—the parson who, though apostolic, is a man of the world; though devout, never eccentric! though a lover of reverent service, a hater of frivolities; though the spiritual pastor and master, yet not the despot, of his parish. Such men will find sufficient material for sermons within the limits of the Gospels and Epistles, as applied to the consciences of those whom they teach, without troubling themselves to discuss the myriad sensations of a period of religious pyrotechny. The model clergyman in perhaps the finest figure in our modern social life, whether he be a prelate or only a "Vicar of Wakefield." To describe him negatively is easy: he is not polemic, he is not sensational, he is not political, he is not ritualistic, he is not fashionable. Yet he can tell an opponent the reason of his faith; he can make the vast verities of God intelligible to all hearers; he can warn his hearers against all democracies save the only conceivable one (*vide* COLERIDGE), the Church itself, he can place architecture and music in their proper positions, subsidiary to religion; he can hold his own in society, as a scholar and a gentleman.

have but 4300 clergy. One clergyman to every 917 in the former, one to every 1900 in the latter case." The few scattered sheep in the open country thus being well cared for, whilst crowds flocked together in the manufacturing districts and great centres of trade in the north of England are often as sheep having no shepherd ; yet it is in the large towns that the battles of the Lord—the contests between truth and error, between religion and every form of wickedness—have to be waged and fought. And again it is the north with its teeming population which is more and more influencing the nation as a whole.

There is also the other aspect of distribution, viz. the allocation of the clergy according to fitness, and this also is not altogether satisfactory. They should be ranged to some extent according to their various powers and suitability, so as to secure for the Church the greatest possible advantage ; where the field is most hotly contested and the walls of Zion most fiercely assailed, the Church wants soldiers of the most approved skill and courage, and the most strenuous efforts of all her *champion* sons. Instead of this being carefully provided for, our richest livings, the prizes of the Church, take many, if not most, of our superior men to country parishes where first-class talent is rarely required, and where men might be eminently useful who know but little of Latin or Greek. On the other hand, the livings of our large towns are generally poorly endowed, and so in the

centres of intelligence and population, the places where picked and most able men should be, there are oftentimes found men of weak and inferior ability. But let us not forget that the object here in view is not so much to show how the people gain or lose through the patronage system, but how the clergy are affected and disposed of.

Recognising the immensity of her work, the Church has at length addressed herself to a fuller performance of it. Some not inconsiderable expansion of our ecclesiastical machinery in large towns has been effected ; old parishes have been subdivided (under the powers of Sir R. Peel's and other Acts) and provision made to some extent for the ministerial supervision of the great masses of population who have outgrown the operation of our parochial system, clergymen being planted where they were most wanted. Much more will have to be done in this direction before that expectation can be fulfilled which was lately expressed by Mr. Disraeli to the Earl of Shaftesbury (who had presented a memorial to further such an end): "I have ever myself," said the Premier, "been of opinion that it was in the great cities the Church would effect, in this age, her greatest triumphs."

Regarding the matter figuratively, stiff fallows have to be broken up and the good seed got in ; a thousand flocks lost and famishing in the wilderness have to be gathered and tended ; the bread of life has to be

given to the tens of thousands in our manufacturing districts.

This great work is now committed to a small section of the Church clergy who have patiently and laboriously sought to perform it, wrestling hard to stem the torrent of vice and irreligion, infidelity and licentiousness in the most densely peopled districts. These hard-worked clergy are often able men, but our town parishes as a rule are too poorly paid to secure for them the best men. Important spheres requiring high talent, and involving constant work, must be properly filled, and to secure this for them, they must be well paid.

Mr Disraeli in a speech at High Wycombe, spoke as follows :

“ Another means by which the nationality of the Church may be asserted I mention last, not because I think it inferior in importance to any of those which have preceded it. You must render your clergy more efficient, whether in the great towns you increase in the staff of curates, which perhaps is more advantageous than building churches without making preparations for their maintenance, still less for their endowment, or whether you make an effort throughout the country for putting an end to those low stipends which are now, almost in mockery, appended to the discharge of laborious parochial duty. I can say, what I have no doubt many gentlemen in this room can also say, that in innumerable cases which I am acquainted with at this moment the clergyman of the Church of England, devoting his life, his health, the fruits of a most refined education, to the service of his God and the comforting of the people, is not only not remunerated, but is absolutely, by his contributions to local and parochial objects and institutions, out of pocket at the end of the year in the cure which he serves.”



If a clergyman has private means he can live on them. It is not, however, reasonable to expect all clergymen to have fortunes or means of their own. It cannot therefore be too strongly asserted, that if in a country like England and a time like the present we want to have a powerful and educated clergy, we must couple good salaries with the duty and privilege of preaching the Gospel. It is a most serious evil that the Church should have clergymen rendering faithful and valuable services in her front ranks, which services are prolonged from year to year, while, as frequently happens, they receive only a mere acknowledgment of their merits and claims, the work they do being so inadequately paid. Much real nonsense is talked about the fact that the Apostles did not clothe themselves in fine linen, did not fare sumptuously every day, or draw the salary of an archbishop. Those who remind us what was done by apostolic self-sacrifice forget some all-important circumstances. England is not Syria or Rome; and whether ardour or faith or brilliancy of intellect be considered, there is not a particularly close resemblance between St. Paul and an ordinary clergyman. In these days the most versatile Dissenting preacher would decidedly lessen his usefulness by so far imitating the great Apostle as to combine the occupation of a tent-maker with that of an evangelist. Old Chaucer says:

“If thou be poor, farewell thy reverence.”

Of all the hard lots which can befall a gentleman, so far as the utter absence of worldly comfort goes, perhaps the hardest is that of the incumbents of district parishes in manufacturing towns,

“Work, work, work,  
From early morning to day’s decline ;  
Work, work, work,  
While wife and children pine.”

To be placed on the horns of this dilemma, either to accept eleemosynary gifts, clothes, etc., or to run into debt, is the fate of many such clergy ; and what can be more calculated to depress and (I was going to say) demoralise men of education and honourable feeling, than to be always in debt, not through their extravagance, but through their incomes being totally insufficient to meet the expenses of their station in life ; what can be more unfair than this, that a horrid fear of being unequal to pay the quarter’s butcher’s bill, and an urgent need of half-a-dozen shirts, should prevent such men seeking that recruiting of health and spirits and little fitful gleam of short-lived worldly pleasure to be gained by ten days’ holiday at the seaside.

These men not only bear the burden and heat of the day, but they are the links by which the interests of the people are bound to the Church, and the tests by which its value is estimated. It is a fact that the great mass of the people form their opinion on the Church as an institution for good not so much on

the Scriptural character of the Creeds, Articles, and Prayer Book, as on the devotedness and affability, the kind-heartedness and fine character, possessed by her ministers and their families. How vast then is the importance to the Church that its living agent, mouthpiece, and representative in populous parishes, he, i. e., who may elicit love or hatred for her from so many, should be *in every respect* well qualified for his position.

This will be freely granted. Let it also be allowed, that while there is indeed the Divine call to the work there is implied the human responsibility of furnishing all that is necessary to the answering of that call. There is a Divine call to the healing of the sick, to the legal defence of the oppressed and wronged ; yet we take it that this is not sufficient to induce men to practise physic or law ; that while they accept the high view of their vocation, they demand the practical view—a fair chance of support, and the increase of that support according to their personal application and merits. The clergy are not placed in a less favoured position. No Divine voice compels them to join themselves to perpetual poverty ; and if, through ardent zeal, they have put themselves in this position, they have not forfeited their just claim for adequate support.

In worldly professions and employments, the more eminent men, and those who fill most responsible and

difficult places, are highly valued and proportionately paid ; and in the fact that they are not in the Church we have evidence that our patronage system needs overhauling and amending. A wealthy clergy is not to be desired ; but since our Reformed Church never intended her clergy to be either monks or mendicants, they ought at least to have insured to them a decent competency. It surely is a most anomalous thing that men of talent, working laboriously in the most important charges in the richest Church in the world, may thus spend all their days and energies, all along having hardly sufficient means wherewith to maintain their families. There are about 8,500 livings not exceeding 300*l.* per annum, and out of that number more than 5,000 are under 200*l.* Of these, 1,600 are between 150*l.* and 200*l.* a year, and 3,000 are under 150*l.* a year ; a proportion of these poor livings is in country places where there is no laborious duty, the hardship of holding them, therefore, is not so great.

Then, also, it is too much by accident that curates obtain preferment. A curate may be meritorious, and fit in all respects, and yet work on fifteen, twenty, or thirty years, or even his whole life, and never be presented to a living.

The inquiry arises how all this operates : does it make the clergy, as a class, both disappointed and discontented, and does it react upon the profession by causing it to be recruited by men of inferior standard and class ?

Notwithstanding a statement at the Bath Church Congress, that the supply of candidates for Holy Orders was so scanty that the bishops had to lower their standards of examination, and, like recruiting sergeants in time of war, enlist not merely the best men, but all who come to them, it is difficult to answer this last question. The supply of clergy is still largely drawn from the Universities, and of the number coming from theological colleges there is a greater proportion than formerly of the educated and well-to-do classes. Oxford and Cambridge still give us the majority of our clergymen, but we can hardly expect this will long continue; especially if it becomes *more* hopeless for graduates to aspire to gyrate beyond the large Nethinim circle serving the Church as curates.

The feelings of the three classes from which the Church of England has hitherto been supplied may be gauged with some degree of accuracy. The classes referred to are—1st, the highborn and wealthy; 2nd, the well educated of middle rank and professional men; and 3rd, men of a lower grade who receive no University training.

As regards the first class, their position with respect to the Church, and that of the Church to them, is unchanged, and in all probability the positions of honour and influence and pay which the Church possesses, and which are within their reach, will attract

in future as large a number as formerly. With regard to the third class, for it is convenient to notice the second and third classes in inverted order — this class are those who, springing from an inferior position, are yet often filled with earnest zeal, and who, by dint of much effort and struggling, are educated sufficiently to satisfy bishops whose parish clergy are at a loss for curates. To this class of men a small stipend is satisfactory ; coming from hard antecedents, they submit naturally and willingly to hardships, the more so because, as clergymen, they are raised above their brothers and former equals. As education spreads we may expect that great accessions will swell the number of clergy of this sort ; but all thoughtful Churchmen will understand what must be the effect on the Church if she has to trust to such recruits as these.

With respect to the second class of men, these have hitherto been the backbone of the ministry of the Church. There is, however, too much reason to fear we shall fail in obtaining such a full supply from this class as formerly.

The old conditions of the nation are rapidly changing, if not entirely altered. Instead of the Church being one of the chief and most eligible sources of employment for this class of youths, it is now only one among many. The Civil Service is thrown open, employment in merchants' offices, railways, and other

undertakings is well paid and plentiful. Then also other professions are often so profitable, and the Church on the whole so unprofitable and unpromising, that it is most probable there will be fewer and fewer of this class turning their thoughts to it as a fitting sphere for their future life. Young men are beginning to know, and the fathers of young men also, what are the true conditions of the Church of England as a profession. And they who have been nurtured softly, and who have any choice, will not undergo its trials and its injustice.

The following from a *Times*' article is worth inserting :

"As the prosperity of the nation increases, the Church in a pecuniary sense is being swamped. The national wealth is rising and rising higher and higher, and completely overwhelming her in the comparison. She is up to her neck, and can as a profession but just breathe. Men are less and less attracted to her service—there are so many more openings and avenues to success in life. If a young man has a fair head and moderate perseverance, the chances are that in twenty years' time he will, in trade or the Civil Service, have made a fortune ; while his brother in the Church thinks himself lucky upon a living of 400*l.* a year. Under these circumstances, parents who look upon the thing in a business point of view hesitate to recommend the Church as a profession to their sons. The son may be a good, a very good Christian, a very useful man, a very public-spirited man in another department and calling, and may also in the end be twenty, thirty, or fifty thousand pounds the richer for it. This is an advantage which, however indifferent a parent or guardian may be to it in his own case, he has no right to set aside in the case of another."

It is somewhat remarkable, and it tends to confirm the views here taken, that whereas formerly young men at the Universities were understood to be destined for the Church who did not give out a contrary report, now no one is believed to be looking forward to a clergyman's career who has not announced that such is his intention. As regards worldly prospects, it is acknowledged that any one who decides on taking Holy Orders is boldly resolved upon taking a most desperate leap in the dark. If, however, the standard of our Church's love is maintained high and pure, we shall not lack candidates for her ministry of the right sort; the more abounding temptations of the world, its large bribe of riches and luxuries, will draw off some who might have joined her ranks—but we can bear the loss of such.

One thing contributing to the contentment of the underpaid clergy is the high social status accorded to them. They everywhere receive great consideration, partly owing to the prevalence of a strong traditional feeling of respect for the Church's representatives, and partly owing to their personal superiority and high culture, from which cause they also enjoy a large amount of influence. However poor such consolation as this may be when *res angusta domi* prevails, it unquestionably has an effect in the way of reconciling many to the wretchedly low rate at which their services are remunerated.



§ 5. Regarding the position of an average clergyman in the most favourable light possible, the unpleasant fact remains that he is miserably paid. This, more especially in the case of the town clergy, is most unfortunate, not only for themselves, but for the Church of which they are ministers. It is the working clergy who, it is admitted on all hands, are the redeeming point of the Church of England, that in it which most savours of the Church of Christ, and wins souls to Him and admiration and respect from men. They have laboured hitherto patiently and uncomplainingly, but will those who are constantly filling up the ranks in the place of the departed, and taking their spheres and fields of labour, be as contented with abuses and as silent under hardships as their predecessors? It is hardly likely. The worker is worthy of his reward, and will not much longer be content without it. E. Ackroyd, Esq., M.P., in a valuable Church Congress paper on Lay Co-operation, remarks: "The great stumbling-block to young men taking Holy Orders is one which the laity can alone remove, arising from the slender endowment of livings, especially the Peel Districts." Mr. A. quoted the letter of a curate, who in a public letter had instanced a number of wretched poor curacies and livings. He himself rejoiced in the sole charge of a new district—poor, populous, and wicked—with 120*l.* a year; this letter concluded with this pithy appeal, "Let the laity, if

they want Church work to do, take this matter into serious consideration. Let them make the cause of the clergy their own, for it is their own, if they want conscientious, fearless guides for their souls."

There never was a time when the laity worked more harmoniously and heartily with the clergy than at the present; they respond readily to our wishes, and show us warm and appreciative sympathy, and as a rule are quite sensible of the obligation of their position and wealth. Yet it is fair to say that our great nobles and territorial lords, enthroned in wealthy supremacy in their different villages, hardly equal their town contemporaries in munificent acts. Their gifts are rarely proportioned to their means. In towns appeals are made to merchants all the year round, so generosity and the habit of giving are acquired. Nobles and squires of country places have not constant demands on their liberality, and constant occasion to practise self-denial in giving, so a munificent act costs them no small effort.

All however who are patrons of small livings, and rich enough, having in them a call and opportunity to exercise generosity, should augment them to at least 300*l.* a year. It were worth their while to be thus munificent, if not from the best motives, from *amour propre* to associate their names with a notable and generous act, and to redeem themselves from the discredit of having a possession offending sorely against

the fitness and propriety of things, a possession which is miscalled a living, being really a starving.

Though a reasonable hope can be entertained that a well disposed and liberal laity will contribute their share of what is lacking towards a proper maintenance for the working clergy, we are bound to do our best to correct certain great blemishes and abuses in the Church which will shortly be noticed, and which are as scourges in the sides and thorns in the eyes of her friends.

The uncomplaining patience of the clergy, notwithstanding the rise of all around them in other callings, is mainly to be accounted for by their having as a rule taken Holy Orders from the highest motives. Then also they are not at the mercy of popular feeling and impulse, and to be free from the capricious will of man, "uncertain, coy, and hard to please," is felt and justly looked upon as an inestimable advantage.

From all that can be gathered as to the feelings of the clergy, there is no one who would prefer any voluntary system to that under which he lives. Whatever hardships belong to his position, they may be regarded as less trying than those which fall to the lot of most Dissenting ministers.

### PART III.

**B**OTH the interests, rights, and obligations of the patrons, and position of the clergy, have been regarded. Remembering that the Church is not for the benefit of her functionaries, but that, on the contrary, they occupy their positions for her benefit, we next regard the good which is and which might be effected amongst the people by means of our Episcopal Church. Thus that point in the matter under discussion is reserved to the last, which after all has the most importance. It argues well for our system, as compared with the elective plan of the Congregationalists (amongst whom a new appointment often lets loose disturbing elements with disastrous effect), that our patrons' appointments lead generally to a peaceful settlement of the new clergyman. This certainly is an advantage.

If it be thought there is something anomalous in a minister being imposed upon a parish without their having any voice in the matter, it must be remembered, that, like most anomalies in England, it is practically counterbalanced through the restrictions imposed by our Articles, by the use of universally accepted forms of worship, and especially by the bishop's ordeal at the time of ordination.

The public and general estimation in which the Church of England is held is founded upon a general approbation of her doctrines and services. She is

respected for her time-honoured traditions, for her freedom alike from tyranny and latitudinarianism, for her inculcation of loyalty, sobriety, and obedience to law, for her strict injunction of duty to God and to man, founded on Christian and Scriptural motives. Yet the fact must not be overlooked, that in a vast majority of instances the test of its excellence is resolved by individuals into a liking or disliking, an acceptance or non-acceptance, of the particular minister by whom the Church is represented to them. There is an axiom of profound wisdom which tells us that that is best which is administered best. If the Church stands high in the esteem and strong in the affections of the people, it is because as a rule the character of the clergy, who are her representatives, commands their respect. Our parishes have mostly a gentleman and a scholar for their clergyman, and very often a sound and earnest divine. Hence the vitality of religion in the Church, and the amount of energy she shows in promoting education, etc., etc. The maintenance of the great missionary societies and home charities indicates the existence of vital religion, and speaks well alike for clergy and people.

Churches exist and are scattered over the length and breadth of the land, and by means of a settled local and definite ministry the Church labours regularly and continuously to evangelise the country; and notwithstanding many human and personal imperfections, she does certainly carry on the great work

which our Lord commanded. The clergy are busy exercising an influence on the side of godliness and for good in hundreds of poor parishes where no other benign influence is known, and where but for them many poor people would be miserably destitute and comfortless, especially in times of sickness and in winter.

“The agricultural labourer has been neglected these generations by politicians, and during their neglect who has cared for the agricultural labourer? Why, gentlemen who in the capacity of parish clergy have watched over and guarded the interest of these children of the fold. If there be any sight more lovely than another in our agricultural life, it is that of the country parson in his country parish. He holds the lamp that lights; he is the fire that warms; he is the solace which soothes the agricultural labourer in his many sorrows and amidst his divers afflictions. It is the country clergyman who has given to the agricultural labourer the education he has. It is the country clergyman who has given to the agricultural labourer those Christian charities which have soothed the asperities of our poor law. It is the country clergyman who has cheered a dreary life, and who has smoothed a hard pillow in the dying hour.”

This extract from the speech of a member of Parliament contains a deserved eulogy. And it explains how it was that when the noted Mr. Cobbett (who was not likely to have much prejudice in favour of the Church) was asked what county he considered the happiest, he answered, Suffolk, assigning as the reason that in every two or three miles there were to be seen the comfortable hamlet, the parish church, and the parsonage. And the following remarks of Lord Hampton are full of practical wisdom and good sense :

"The greatest strength and the best and most efficient defence of the Church is to be found in the presence in every parish of a sound, right-minded clergyman, doing his duty without resorting to any excess of dress or ritual, content honestly, actively, zealously, and piously to perform the sacred duties of his office."

The Bishop of Peterborough has given utterance to a view very similar to that of Lord Hampton :

"The great strength of the Church lies in honest, earnest, and successful parochial work. The real danger of the Church of England is not from her extreme men, although there is a danger there ; the real danger is from the drones—men who set their parishes day by day a prominent and abiding example of all that the Church ought not to be ; men who showed the very worst side of an endowed system in that it allowed men to neglect the duties they are bound in conscience to perform."

*Life*, even if characterised by a few eccentricities, is to be preferred to the sleepy repose of death ; and the clergy, like all other classes in the present day, must *prove their value*, for they are estimated according to what they do.

True wisdom suggests that the English Church should henceforth act as though she intended to wholly rest her claims for national acceptance upon the firm basis of unobtrusive and universal parochial usefulness (extending a spirit of kindness towards orthodox Dissenters) ; far more firm will this basis be than the old one of ancient right and traditionary respect.

Long years ago there was a Norman earl, to whose castle the king's heralds came, demanding in their

royal master's name that he produce his title to his lands and honours. To the surprise of those officers, the old earl, with great warmth of spirit, hurled his huge sword before them on the floor of his banquet hall, by way of answer. That was not the act of a mere ruffian. It was by his sword that he served and defended his country; and on his service to his country was founded his claim to rank and wealth. So, too, every English institution must expect to have it demanded from time to time by what right it exists, and it must show not only that it has served the country well in time past, it must also prove that it is able still to accomplish its object by adapting itself to the new wants and wishes of the people. No other title will, in the long run, avail anything, or save it from the condemnation of public opinion. The religious and social state of England (and the world) are influenced for good to an extent of which few have any conception, by the efforts of learned and devoted men, whose voices are seldom heard beyond their own parishes, but who are most influential for good in their respective neighbourhoods. There are those (the Archbishop of Canterbury observes) who zealously "allege that the Established Church is an evil. Such people it is impossible to meet by any concessions. We can only do our work faithfully and conscientiously, and trust that, seeing the effect of our work, they may be better disposed towards us. The work performed by the Church will prove her to be a blessing," and win for her universal



respect, if it fails to evoke universal admiration. We may hope that if we pray for the outpouring of the Spirit of God, and expect it in faith, we shall receive enlarged faith, strength, and vitality. The writer has the greatest confidence the English Church will retain her hold on the affections of the mass of the people so long as they find in their clergymen that forbearance, humility, meekness, and brotherly kindness which is to be seen in all ministers worthy of the ministry ; and so long as the clergy shew fidelity to the truths of the Reformation, and earnestly exert themselves to be what, from their advantages as regard prestige, position, education, etc., they ought to be, viz. a mighty power in the land for good. Let us then lift up the standard of our Master higher and with a stronger grasp than we have ever done before—only let that standard be bright and conspicuous, and many will gather round it who are now separated from the Church.

That Church patronage has its weak points and imperfections must be granted. Still it is essentially a good system. Like the British Constitution, it is the creation of circumstances, and, all circumstances being considered, it works fairly well, and is good alike for clergy and people. The last forty or sixty years have made extraordinary changes, by which the machinery of the Church has become dislocated, and no wonder. No country has passed through greater social changes than this. Within the last sixty years it has more than doubled its population. At the

beginning of this century our population was eight millions ; at the time of the Reformation only four. So that, while it took nearly three hundred years for England to double her population, she has now three times as many people within her borders as there were sixty years ago ; no wonder, then, the Church has lost her power of doing all that is expected and required of her. She wants adaptation, extension, and fresh endowment. And what Saxon thanes, Norman barons, and middle-age merchants and nobles were eight hundred years in doing, we have before us to do with increased heaviness, i. e. we have to provide for the extra millions of the population by which we are increased. And, thank God, we have men of means and spirit equal to the greatness and urgency of the case ; we shall extend and amend, and so, by God's blessing, the English Church will become equal to the present wants of the nation.

§ 6. We have said that the ministerial agents of the Church preponderate in rural districts, and that their numbers are weak where the population and need for ministerial work are greatest. Now would it be right, in an estate where there are large gardens and a park, and many gardeners to keep them, that these should almost always be seen together in the park, the gardens being left to weeds and desolation ?

*About ten years ago*, the present Prime Minister, speaking at a diocesan gathering at High Wycombe, after commending the earnestness and devotion of

those Dissenters who had sought to spread religion in towns, and saying, if it be allowed that those sincerely religious persons who had quitted the Church formed a large part of the population of the nation, there was nothing in their existence which should prevent the Church of England from asserting her nationality.

The difficulties of dealing with the great masses of town population not in communion with the Church, who yet had not quitted it, were also experienced by the religious Dissenting bodies under less advantageous circumstances, and therefore the evangelising these masses should be zealously attempted, and Mr. Disraeli saw nothing to damp the ardour, or depress the energies of those Churchmen who sought to bring these masses to Christ, and at the same time establish a proper relationship between the Church and the nation.

The spiritual wants and necessities of the community, partly by neglect and partly by the enormous increase of the population, had unfortunately altogether outstripped the provision of the Church.

“ I mention a great fact, which no one can deny : it is this, that the population has outgrown the Church ; no one can deny that. I do not deny it, but I see in that fact motive and necessity for extended effort. If, indeed, the Church of England were in the same state as the pagan religion was in the time of Constantine ; if her altars were paling before the Divine splendour of inspired shrines, it might be well, indeed, for the Church, and for the ministers of the Church, to consider the course that they should pursue ; but nothing of that kind is the case. You have to deal, so far as regards the millions who are not in communion

with the Church, and whom I will describe, distinguishing them from the Dissenters, as those who are different to the Church—you are dealing with millions of English people. And who are the English people? The English people are, without exception, the most enthusiastic people in the world. There are more excitable races. The French, the Italians, are much more excitable, but for deep and fervid feeling there is no race in the world at all equal to the English. And what is the subject, of all others, upon which the English people have always been most enthusiastic? Religion. The notes on the gamut of their feelings are few, but they are deep. Industry, liberty, religion form the solemn scale. Industry, liberty, religion—that is the history of England. Now, upon these three subjects they have had periods of exaltation. They have had periods of deep feeling, alike with regard to toil and with regard to liberty; and it is not at all impossible—nay, I would not hesitate to say, so far as my own opinion is concerned, I think there are many in this room who will witness a period of exaltation in the public mind of the country, and especially among those millions, with regard to religion, that has certainly not been equalled in our time, or in the times of our fathers. But what an opportunity is that for a Church—what an opportunity, when great bodies of the nation who have never been in communion with the Church, with their minds, their feelings, and their passions all in the direction of religion, and influenced by the religious principle; what an opportunity for a Church, with her learning, her organisation, and the ineffable influences of tradition, with her sacred services, with her divine offices, with all the beauty of holiness in which she worships, to advance and address them! What an immense field for a Church! But what a field, not merely for a corporation which is not merely a Church, but which is the Church of England, which blends with divine instruction an appeal to the sentiment of patriotism, and announces itself not only as the Church of God, but the Church of the country. I say that, with those views, instead of supposing that the relations which exist between a large body of our fellow-subjects and the Church—relations at this moment of indifference and even of

alienation—are causes why the Church should not assert her nationality, they are causes and circumstances which peculiarly call upon the Church to exert herself, and not only to exert herself, but to prepare for a coming future which will demand her utmost energies, as I believe it will give its greatest rewards.”

Something *considerable* already has been done to overtake the ever increasing population. This will be seen from the following statistics, giving the number of churches built within the space of a life-time, viz. from 1801–1872 inclusive. These number 4129, of which 925 were churches rebuilt. It is remarkable, for it shows the increasing energy and zeal of Churchmen, that while in the first thirty-six years the number consecrated was but 694, in the second thirty-six years it was 3435. The evidence is stronger if we compare the first and last ten years' achievements together ; in the first *ten* 43 were built, in the last *ten* 1150. The activity and home missionary enterprise is here shown to advantage ; because, and be it remembered, that in most instances a new church implies a spiritually destitute place, and a new clergyman. A church, erected in a district for the first time, brings with it many things of a kindred character. Day schools generally follow, Sunday schools, Bible classes, house to house visitation, adult and evening classes make their appearance in quick succession. There are always provident societies of some kind, frequently penny banks, clothing and sick clubs, giving people not merely inducements, but also facilities, for thrift, prudence, and self-denial.

Further, a consecrated church is wholly unlike a chapel, i. e. a preaching station with a suitable building, which may be removed or sold, just as the interests or wants of the proprietors may decide. A church, when once set apart by the legal act of consecration, is given for all time for the benefit of the people within its own parochial limits, and in its very nature implies permanence, viz. permanent instruction, permanent worship, and permanent influences and associations for good.

Those acquainted with the manufacturing and mining districts, where population and wealth increase at an equally rapid rate, know in how short time an ordinary peopled parish has often become a flourishing town. The many large towns of Lancashire at the beginning of the century were hardly larger than overgrown villages, having each but *one* parish church.

A new Church era or epoch dates from 1818, the year when power was first possessed to subdivide large parishes. This particular power was most needed in London and the largest towns; and in Staffordshire, Durham, Lancashire, and Yorkshire. It was almost entirely in this latter county that Dr. Sumner, Bishop of Chester, in nineteen and a half years (1828-1848) consecrated 234 churches, at the rate of one a month; and Dr. Lee, Bishop of Manchester, consecrated in twenty-one years (1848-1869) 122 churches. The Church there would now be completely prostrate had not church accommodation thus

enormously increased, and the children of Church people would have lapsed by thousands into Nonconformity, or else—terrible to think—into Popery, infidelity, or actual heathenism.

But notwithstanding that all over the kingdom there are more churches, more missions, more clergy, and the attendance at our services is larger than at any other period of its history, the Church in certain populous places is powerless before numbers. The population has so shifted, and the relative importance of places, *toto cælo*, is so altered, that according to a writer in the *Quarterly Review* for July, the urban and suburban population of towns, such as the Registrar General calls large towns, is 15,500,000 against 7,500,000 in small towns and rural districts. Yet for these fifteen and a half millions we have at present only 3000 parishes, while there are more than 10,000 parishes for 7,500,000 of rural population. These figures are very noticeable. The comparative inadequacy of the Church's organisation for towns, and her provision for town clergy, is seen from another set of figures. For 15,500,000 of our town population we have 500 clergy, consisting of incumbents and curates, with endowments reaching only 750,000*l.*, while for 7,500,000 country folk we have 13,200 incumbents and curates with 2,700,000*l.*

The share of the pay which goes to the clergy who have the principal share of the Church's work is seen to be strikingly disproportionate from that of their

co-workers in the country. Lord Melbourne's famous let-alone policy has prevailed too long. In justice to those who do her hard work, and to adjust the incomes of livings, it is high time it were admitted as a standing rule and governing principle in the Church, as in the State (wherever the patron's right can be met) that pay and importance shall be apportioned to work and responsibility. A great many things in the system of Church patronage which need amending, to make the Church efficient for the entire nation, never will be amended unless those who know most and care most about them volunteer their aid in devising the remedies. The writer therefore now intends offering a few suggestions to strengthen what is weak, to amend what is imperfect, defective, and wrong, and generally to help forward that new career of usefulness which our beloved Church has begun with much energy and steady zeal.

Whatever hinders the active and efficient working of our parishes which a slight and just alteration of the law might remove, is deserving of mention. According to our system, so very much depends upon the ability and activity of the clergyman, that every effort should be made to secure the right man for the right place, and the right place for the right man. It generally happens that once beneficed a man is shelved (as it is called) for life, because he is so rarely removed and placed elsewhere. He may be eminently suited for a higher and more important sphere, he may have proved his value



by changing the whole aspect of things in a small parish in a few years ; no matter. Five miles from him there may be another parish wanting just the sort of man he is, and the Church interests may be absolutely demanding him, and he quite willing to go there ; no matter. There is no authority able or ready to arrange the matter, so it cannot be ; it is no part of the system of the Church to promote or rather translate any (except the *most* conspicuous), to more suitable spheres. And this is not the whole of the evil. The *law* in a manner says to the clergy, Stop where you are ; remove you shall not ; you are guilty of simony if you attempt it. The man wanting to remove may have a weak constitution and ill health, being superannuated, his voice may be tremulous, poor and thin, and his large parish may require a man of vigour, great activity, and good voice ; no matter. Again, an old man may be overdone with work in a large parish, while near him a young man rusts out his days, having nothing to do that really taxes his energies ; no matter : no facility whatever is granted by which the old and young might exchange places. But surely the superannuated who are past work after a life of hard work deserve some consideration. Now sometimes a money payment would help them to retire to easy spheres, and only by a money payment can exchanges so desirable for the Church be made possible. Of such cases let the bishop be made judge,

and let him be authorised to relax the law of simony when it is clear to him that gain will result to the Church, and the exchange desired will conduce as much to the public as to the individual's advantage.

Here I would notice the Bishop of Peterborough's intention to move for power that bishops may refuse institution to men of seventy. From the Bishop's limited point of view this is right and very desirable. But are there not two sides to the question, and is it not desirable of two evils to choose the least? For a superannuated clergyman to be instituted to a small living is a less evil than for him to remain an incubus on a large and poor living. Again, what provision does the Bishop intend to give to those old men, whose lives have been spent in the Church's service, in lieu of the living he would refuse them? This must be first seen to, or we may soon begin to see obituary notices of clergy who have breathed their last in the workhouse.

The writer fully holds his Bishop's views, that most, if not all, the difficulties of the Church are to be resolved by our getting the right man into the right place. This is far from being the case at present; e. g. the most talented and most educated men at our command are rarely destined to fill our foremost places, and to fight for Christ in the front ranks of the Church. But surely such are most wanted in situations where the struggle against moral evil and intellectual

perversity, against bold heretics and scoffing infidels, is daily recurring and most difficult. Now in all our cities and important boroughs chapels abound, and are fitly officered. Dissent wisely seeks for the right man and finds him, and people are won over, and Dissent flourishes and increases.

Why should not we adopt the same policy? Instead of men of inferior ability, we ought to have our best men placed side by side with the picked men of the Dissenters. We have splendid churches, in prominent places, and though occasionally able incumbents are obtained for them, this cannot be ensured, owing to the poverty of the endowment; and then people forsake the ministry of the Church, and are attracted by the more eloquent preaching of the conventicle.

Where, then, does our best talent find its sphere? Where do the *élite* of our Universities settle down? An answer may be gathered from an inspection of the hundreds of benefices belonging to Oxford, Cambridge, Eton, and Winchester; run your eye down the different lists of College livings, whose total annual value is 350,000*l.*, and you will see them hardly varied by a single familiar name; no populous place, no important centre—the great majority of them are retired rural parishes, having very little parochial work. Some of the best paid of the Crown and Lord Chancellor's livings, and even the richest livings in the bishops'

patronage, intended for the best men of the diocese, are often country parishes in which talent is simply buried. Now the post of honour is the post of difficulty, and the prizes of the Church surely should be placed where talent and energy are particularly wanted, viz., in the most prominent and important centres and parishes. It is absolutely necessary that the present order of things should be reversed. And fortunately a partial remedy is at our command. Let power be given to the Lord Chancellor, bishops, dukes, and all pluralist patrons, to alter the present incomes of their livings, adjusting them to the relative importance of the parishes, the most populous and important receiving the highest pay. This would be a movement in the right direction, and would effect a very beneficial, if not extensive, reform.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The writer recently sent the following letter to the editor of a London journal :

"SIR,—‘An Earnest Churchman’ writes to you with great feeling with respect to the speech lately made by Mr. E. J. Reed, at Tenby, in which that Member of Parliament recommended the Church to redistribute her wealth. ‘Earnest Churchman’ has assumed in his letter that there are *no cases* where a redistribution is possible without evident injustice. The letter quotes the following remark : ‘The Church should redistribute her wealth and income more equitably among her clergy, for at present more than 1000 of them receive only the wages of day labourers, and more than 3000 of them only the pay of artisans, while a few are lapped in luxury that ill befits their profession.’

"This correspondent deprecates these remarks, as ‘they are so very much calculated to mislead. They assume that the Church as a body owns all the property which some earnest Churchmen years ago gave for the benefit of the Church in a certain locality.’ Then an illustration

And with respect to the College livings: it was in contemplation of the wretched garrets, sunless cellars, squalid streets, and crowded courts, and the degradation, social and moral, prevailing in nearly a half of

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is given to make it clear no such reform as is suggested can be entertained with any degree of justice. It is as follows:

“‘An ancestor of mine left 1000*l.* and lands, very many years ago, for the endowment of the church in a certain parish. By judicious arrangement and investment this living now produces 700*l.* a year. The incumbent is looked upon as a rich man, for his neighbour's living is only 160*l.* a year, the founder and those connected with that living having given some miserably small sum for its endowment. I should like to ask Mr. Reed whether he considers that it would be right that any of the money which my ancestor left for the benefit of the church in his own particular parish is to be handed over to supplement the income of the incumbent of the neighbouring parish, because, owing to the niggardliness of persons previously connected with that parish, the income of this incumbent is so wretchedly small. I do not think that such an arrangement would be just, as it would involve the broadest principles of Communism. I think that if my ancestor could rise from his grave, he would say, rather than such a division should be made he would have left his property to fall to his natural heirs.’

“While this writer is perfectly right in this particular case in the way he puts it, he fails to maintain the position he seems to take up, viz. that it is impossible for any distribution of the property of Church livings to be effected without bringing into operation the dangerous principle of Communism. I am at issue with this writer. I believe there are numbers of cases where the property or revenues of livings might be most advantageously redistributed, and without any shadow of injustice being done. And I think that my position and assertion may be proved by making a very little alteration in the way of putting ‘Earnest Churchman's’ illustration.

“Suppose then the ancestor to whom he alludes as living two hundred years ago was patron to both the livings; that he endowed both the 700*l.* and the 160*l.* living, leaving most property to the first, because in all probability the parish was important and populous, while the other

every great town, that Mr. Disraeli says in one of his novels, Why can they not spare us one missionary from New Zealand? We may take up the Premier's parable and say, in contemplation of the intellectual half of our

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was a mere hamlet. And this state of things continued perhaps for some time, but now, after two hundred years, the relative positions of the two places are reversed, and we find a large income going to a clergyman having comparatively nothing to do, and a pitiful income of 160*l.* to one occupying as best he can a highly responsible and laborious charge.

"This writer calls up his ancestor from the grave to emphasise the injustice of any redistribution of the property of separate churches. But in many cases the circumstances were and are as I have supposed them. And in this particular case the ancestor in question, 'if he could rise from the grave,' would, I am sure, signify his complete satisfaction and approval of a rectification of the property of the two livings.

"Instead of referring to dead ancestors and original founders, let us be practical and consider the position and power of their living lineal representatives, the present patrons, and we shall see that a very desirable reform might be easily effected. These persons are not altogether destitute of zeal for the spiritual welfare of those for whom, before God and man, they are in one way responsible.

"The position of pluralist patrons gives them an equal interest, and involves them in equal responsibility, for the spiritual welfare of all the parishioners of all the livings in their gift. Let this be granted. Then it follows that every patron of two or more livings, as he has, from his property interest in them, a moral right, so, through his being their spiritual trustee, it seems a duty on his part to adjust the incomes of all parishes in his gift, according to their relative requirements.

"Were this simple and just reform enacted by the Legislature, the bishop, or some other high authority on behalf of the Church, should be authorised to give or withhold sanction to any proposed redistribution, as a guarantee the Church will only gain by the change.

"I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

"J. GODSON."

town populations, and the ability of the colleges to supply them, "Could they not spare us one Fellow?"

"These towns are teeming with artisans and workmen, who have taken a standing which their ancestors knew nothing of, and they are bent on seizing the knowledge and power which may be denied them by their rulers, able, if they would, to guide their tendencies and gratify their appetite with wholesome food. Socialists, infidels, sceptics, and schismatics of every shade of opinion are working on these masses, and are gaining the post which devotion, zeal, and popular power will always gain over men of thinking and intelligent mind."<sup>1</sup>

This pressing difficulty would in great measure be met were the colleges required to<sup>2</sup> exchange their rural livings for others in towns, or else to endow town parishes from the proceeds after selling, and from taking off from the superfluous incomes of those at present too highly endowed for the work required.

These new town livings, having good incomes, might be disliked by senior Fellows (who have the first refusal); but the juniors, while active and zealous, would take them, and find full scope in them for their abilities

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<sup>1</sup> See *Munro's Parochial Work*.

<sup>2</sup> When "a gift of sympathy and admiration from many friends was made to the Rev. H. Hayman, D.D., on his quitting the head mastership of Rugby in the prime of life," the committee tendered the handsome present in a spirit of prospect rather than in a spirit of retrospect. . . ." And it could not conclude its functions without passing a resolution, in which they urged that a man of Dr. Hayman's eminent scholarship, ability, and energy, was at a great disadvantage in a remote and sequestered place like Aldingham, and that he was entitled to preferment in a more central position with a wider sphere of usefulness.

and energies. If college patronage is ever to prove of appreciable value to the nation, it is absolutely needful to effect some such alteration as this. And by such exchanges and adjustments the Church would do justice to those who did her work, whose incomes would then be proportioned to their services. By the measure proposed, eventually 700*l.* a year might belong to about five hundred revised benefices. Fellows of colleges who go to the Bar and Senate, or become masters in schools and heads of colleges, have their incomes in return for work (not merely for having power to do it), and they acquire high reputation from occupying positions both honourable and difficult.

The setting up of a maximum income for all benefices in official patron's gift would be another means of benefiting the Church and rectifying our patronage system. A maximum has been established for bishops; and it would be easy to strike one for vicars and rectors—700*l.* perhaps would be a fair maximum. While the majority of official clergy are paid much less than 350*l.*, all of the same class are greatly overpaid who get incomes of more than double that sum. Granting that A's aggrandisement is in itself a good thing, it is not if B has in consequence to suffer privation; and for every "official" clergyman who at present has more than sufficient, there are three or four who receive less than sufficient. Further, it might be judiciously enacted that no living in official patronage having less than one



thousand people should be allowed an income of over 350*l.*

The canonries are official appointments worth 500*l.* a year. The duty lasts only three months in a year. Canonries generally go to men having other highly-paid preferment. Now the Church, except in very rare cases, cannot obtain from any man 800*l.* value in service; those therefore who are paid more receive it as being ornamental<sup>1</sup> rather than useful.

It would be well to require that all money coming to a canon from Church sources over that sum be given up, or at least a quarter of the income of his parish, for the quarter of each year he is neglecting its duty through doing duty as a cathedral canon. Of the thousands of well-qualified clergy who hold livings of 300*l.* and under, there would be plenty ready on such terms to take the canonries—men too who have merits which deserve some acknowledgment and reward.

This reform would strengthen the hands of the

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<sup>1</sup> When the foundation stone of St. Philip's, Camberwell, was laid by the Bishop of Winchester, a lunch was given, and a confectionery model of the church graced the table; its spire happened to be shaken off during the lunch by an accident. Afterwards, after archly regarding the mishap, the Bishop observed to the company that "sometimes the pinnacles of churches get knocked off, and perhaps it is for the best, because *we do not want* too much *meretricious ornament*; there need, however, be no fear for the church about to be built, or for the Church generally. . . . Let the clergy and laity work together; if this were done, the Church would stand with the firmness and vigour symbolised by the stone laid that day."—July 28th, 1874.

Ecclesiastical Commissioners very much, and at a time when they need it, for they are beginning to fail in ability to carry on their good work.

Advantage in a pecuniary way would result also from transferring the ownership of certain patronage in official hands. Congregations under an official patron sometimes greatly desire to have the appointment of their own minister: these might be allowed, through trustees, to purchase the patronage at half its value, the money to go to augment the endowment of the living, or, if that be sufficient, to promote the extension of the Church in its neighbourhood. This would be a beneficial development of Lord Chancellor Westbury's Act. A parish showing so much desire to appoint its minister as to willingly and adequately pay for the privilege gives sufficient guarantee that a fit man will be appointed. And since bishops, archdeacons, rectors, etc., only obtained their patronage for the public good, it seems proper that it should be surrendered if the interests of the Church can be otherwise fully secured.

Wider views are wanted on these points than have yet been entertained by writers or members of Parliament. We have an old system to deal with, but there can be no valid reason why the utmost should not be made of it. And were the Church to rearrange and utilise her forces and resources, so far as can be done without injury to vested rights, she would "renew her

youth like the eagles, and not be ashamed to speak with her enemies in the gate."

§ 7. Not long ago, our rural population comprised two-thirds of the nation, and one-third only was living in the towns. It is calculated that in very few years these proportions will be reversed; so there is not only a marvellous *increase*, but a complete and continual *shifting* of the population which requires to be taken into account. How, then, are we preparing and adapting our organisation to meet these altered circumstances. It would be desirable, the writer believes, to take steps to *repress*, as well as to expand and extend.

By a consolidation of adjoining parishes, in cases where two very small ones exist side by side, as they often do both in cities and in the country, power would be economised and the Church suffer no loss. To effect the consolidation the procedure would be exceedingly simple; let them and their incomes be united, and the patrons present to the consolidated benefice alternately.<sup>1</sup> So simple a process would not

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<sup>1</sup> The parish of Radbourne, in the county of Warwick, is a small hamlet, consisting of some four or five houses, lying between Ladbrooke and Priors Hardwick, and though it has no church, it has a rector, whose parishioners attend the neighbouring church of Ladbrooke. It seems that the benefice of Radbourne has recently changed hands, for on Sunday last the Rev. E. C. Topham, M.A., "read himself in" as rector. There being no church, the ceremony was performed in the open air, in the presence of a large concourse of people from the

be possible in the case of adjoining parishes, where the income of one is large and the population small, or where the converse to this obtains. But a natural and very beneficial course might also be pursued in these cases. Instead of consolidating them, let there be a rearrangement of the parish boundaries, and a division of the united income, the patrons' interests being saved by their having the bestowal of the patronage at the rate of two turns by the first, to one by the second. It would be remarkable indeed if nothing required to be altered and amended through the changes slowly made by time, etc. The plan pursued with respect to the churches of the city of London might be extended most advantageously all over the country. A commission for each diocese might at any rate make an official investigation and report the result.

The Church of England may be likened to an extensive forest, whose grandeur increases day by day as young trees spring up with strong vigorous growth, and extend it on every side. Still "there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed." The greatness of the national Church does not consist in her having magnates in numerous retired places, towering like kings of the forest in secluded glades, but in her

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neighbouring villages. In the morning the new rector read the articles, and in the afternoon preached on what tradition says is the site of the old parish church.—*Birmingham Post*.

having a sufficient number of devoted and adequately paid men, everywhere commensurate with the nation's requirements ; in short, in her asserting her nationality.

One of the largest and most hopeful measures of the last few years gives facility to parishes having an unmanageable large population by which they can be divided, and separate charges made : every new district thus formed is constituted a separate parish, and it then receives a small endowment from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. In this way the Church has done much, and is yearly doing more, towards providing pastoral supervision and the means of grace for the bulk of the population.

Our authorities showed great wisdom in thus adapting our system to new requirements, and providing for the increased wants of the country.

Elastic enough in one respect, the old system is left too rigid in another and equally important respect—the Church at large becomes answerable for the endowment of new districts, which have a direct and most just claim upon the mother church. This claim has irresistible force in cases where the mother church has become not only inadequate but proportionately and exceedingly rich. The original endowment was given to meet the needs of the whole parish, the pay for the duty. It is admitted by the Legislature that the parish has a claim to adequate pastoral supervision—then why should not the income of the parish be

spread fairly over it? why should several clergy work and exist for the parish, while it still exists for the benefit of one in particular? A long succession of incumbents were put into possession of the freehold and income, having the clearest understanding as to their being made, at the time, morally responsible for the whole parish; the population having become more than one can possibly minister to (as ours is strictly a territorial system), should not the income cease in proportion with the release from duty in that territory or parish?<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Rushton, the late Vicar of Blackburn, perceived the selfish injustice of permitting such a state of things in his parish, and, to his praise be it said, he practically admitted (however inadequately) the claim upon his living of four new district churches in the old parish of Blackburn, voluntarily endowing each of them out of the vicarial glebe with 50*l.* a year.

Dr. Molesworth also, the present Vicar of Rochdale, for some years has *voluntarily* made over 2000*l.* a year of his vicarial income to augment the new district churches in the old parish of Rochdale—in anticipation of the change to take place at his death.

The writer maintains there is nothing to bar the right of all Peel districts, so detached from their mother

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<sup>1</sup> Wesley, in his *Commentary*, has the following striking remark upon the text, "The hireling fleeth because he is a hireling:" "If it be hard for men of a hireling spirit who take money *and do work*, good God! what is the case of him who takes money and *does none*."

churches, from a just and rightful share in their endowments, and that we cannot expect any stability for Ecclesiastical revenues if they be not rightly and righteously rearranged. Supposing it is thirty or fifty years since those districts were formed, private property in wrong hands is recoverable after forty years' detention ; and there is a maxim, *Ecclesiæ nulum tempus occurrit*, the right we speak of is fairly claimed, and a law should enact that it be acknowledged and met at the next voidance of all such old parish livings.

The good of parochial endowments lies in their proper use, and loss and serious evil necessarily result from their abuse and perversion from the purpose to which they have been applied, perhaps for centuries, by the careless default of yesterday. A panic would be occasioned and a great outcry if, through the non-interference of Government, many rectors had to suffer a loss of three quarters of their income. In the cases mentioned, it is not the rectors but the Church that suffers ; and it gives rise to great offence and indignation that three quarters of many old parishes, just at the time they most require it, should be bereft of the spiritual provision for their pastoral care. In places where the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have interposed the Church elsewhere has had to suffer, for their funds should go to places never provided for, and not be diverted to places for which ample provision

has been made. It should therefore be enacted, that in parishes where the population has greatly increased, and the income doubled in thirty or forty years, that that income be divided, and provision made for separate charges under the same patron. There has been legislation of the kind proposed to meet special cases, as e.g. at Manchester. The Bishop of that diocese said lately :

“ With respect to the endowments of the old parish church of Manchester, out of which endowments had been given to forty or fifty churches into which the old parish had been divided, these were all, or nearly all, gifts of Thomas, Earl of Delawarr, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, at the end of the reign of Henry IV. or the beginning of that of Henry V. That nobleman noticed that there was no adequate provision for the spiritual wants of the people of Manchester, and he therefore had endowed the College church with certain portions of land lying in different parts of the town and the neighbouring place of Newton Heath, which land had become exceedingly valuable with the great increase of population. So that the gift of the Earl of Delawarr in the beginning of the fifteenth century, which had been only sufficient at that time to support four priests and two chapters, was now sufficient to maintain the original church and chapters, and the incumbents of thirty or forty other churches which had been erected in the various parishes that the old parish had been divided into.”

The same treatment has also been applied to Dod-dington-cum-March-cum-Borwick, Rochdale, etc. But a *general rule* is called for, to meet many cases and to do away with the reproach and shameful contrast which frequently exist between the beneficed clergy of the



same old parish, several being steeped in poverty, while one is lapped in luxury which ill befits his profession.

The living of Burnley, brought before Parliament by Mr. Shaw, Member for that borough, is a case in point. The population of the old parish has swelled and doubled and immensely increased within a few years ; so too the income of the Vicar, which is 3000*l.*, and which fifty years ago was not more than 200*l.* This enormous increase is owing to the Vicar's land at the railway station having (through the increase of population) all become building land. The history of this possession shows that the new churches in the old parish or parochial chapelry of Burnley have a peculiar and very strong claim to three quarters, or *at least half*, of the present income from it. For, last century, upon the parishioners presenting a memorial to the patron which declared that the living did not afford a proper maintenance for their minister, he arranged to raise money (400*l.*) jointly with them to meet a grant from Queen Anne's Bounty, to purchase this small but now most valuable estate. To meet the present wants of the town, three or four new district churches have been built, and endowed with beggarly incomes (150*l.*), towards which neither the patron nor vicar has done anything. After holding out *on principle* for many years, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have just recently consented to augment the

endowments of these Burnley livings, thus *misapplying* the *general funds* of the Church. This case speaks for itself, and comment upon it is quite superfluous.

Another case in point is Prestwich-cum-Oldham, a large old parish near Manchester. This is another extreme case, and it deserves mention, as it shows the evil in a complicated and exaggerated form. The rapid increase of population has created no greater parochial anomalies than here. From a village Oldham has grown with marvellous rapidity, and now it ranks high amongst the busy and wealthy boroughs of Lancashire. The mother church of the old parish is at Prestwich, once the more important of the two villages, and still a rural place four miles distant.

For the sake of convenience to himself and the inhabitants, sometime last century, instead of going himself to reside in the part of the parish which was to be of most importance, the rector provided a substitute to discharge his duties in Oldham, and also arranged to pay his representative 40*l.* a year. This arrangement was legally accepted and made binding, and observe what has resulted. Ever since, the parochial duty of the rectors of Prestwich-cum-Oldham has been comprised in the single act of severing sufficient capital from Prestwich to produce 40*l.*, or they still pay that sum annually, and with the receipt they calmly take a yearly quittance of moral obligation towards five-sixths of the people of the old parish.

Such an arrangement as this, however suitable for the circumstances of the place and the parties who made it, became plainly and even ridiculously inequitable. 40*l.* ceases to bear the same proportion to the rector's income which it formerly bore, and became utterly insufficient as a stipend for a resident minister. So the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have had to divert money from other places to which it should go, and make it up to 300*l.* The new district churches of Oldham are also maintained by incomes paid from the general funds of the Church.

Surely no arrangement could be founded on more erroneous suppositions than the one referred to. 1st. It supposed the income from the endowment would still stand at 400*l.* or 500*l.* 2nd. That the stipends of curates would never rise above 40*l.*; and 3rd. That the population of Oldham would remain stationary.

The rural Rector of Prestwich, relieved of work, is in altogether altered circumstances, his income being doubled and increased until it is now about 2500*l.* a year. And in a few years it will be doubled, from a similar cause to that which made the vicarage of Rochdale so rich, for Dr. Lyon's leases (made last century for ninety-nine years) will fall in and have to be renewed.

The writer suggests that here also is a matter the borough Members should inquire into; their settling the Church claims of Oldham on a fair and

proper basis would constitute them public benefactors.

It might be arranged that St. Mary's, Oldham, in consideration of its greater importance and preponderance of population, should at the next voidance be regarded as the proper sphere and place of residence of him who is entitled to receive the chief part of the income belonging to the old parish, and in such a case the patronage of St. Mary's should be in Lord Wilton's gift, while that of Prestwich would go to the holder of the living of St. Mary.

Or should this proposal be rejected, at the next voidance of Prestwich let half the present endowment be taken from it for Oldham; or 70*l.* a year for every resident minister of the church (who is an incumbent) *now* required for Oldham; or at least, for decency's sake, let the same proportion be taken from the present, as 40*l.* was to the old rectory income, the money going to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners towards the yearly outlay paid by them to Oldham, and for which, by all the laws of reason, right, and *precedent*, the rectory endowment is responsible.

In return, let the rector or his patron gain an interest in all the patronage. We have got rid of clerical substitutes and now require residence, because it is just to demand that the work be done by the person paid for it. It ought also to be required, that those clergy who in district churches share the spiritual work and

responsibility shall have a proportionate share of the endowment. No institution can continue in safety that prefers offending the moral sense of the community to making a just change; life, growth, and *change* in consequence of growth, are necessary for the Church and every other institution. In nature, in order to maintain an uninterrupted continuous action, *change* is continually going on; by the law of growth, a portion of that which has become too old is rejected, and in its stead there is created and established a portion of that which is new. Let us act in a like way. It is not needed nor desired to do more than to apply the principles of *the founders*, in the spirit in which they held them, to the changed condition of the present time.

Again, the law requires amendment with respect to benefices held by the City companies and under trusts, of which latter there are several in the kingdom having funds for acquiring more livings.

Trustees can only act on the terms of their trust deed; but having as patrons to consider the spiritual welfare of the whole parish, in cases where an increased population renders it beyond one man's capability to superintend, they should be empowered to make provision for dividing the parish and forming a second charge in it out of their funds; and further, they should not be allowed to purchase other livings until the parishes for which they are already responsible

are *properly* provided for. In some cases the endowment of the mother church might be made to help, especially if the income has increased beyond 350*l.* a year. The living of Colne, in Lancashire, may be cited as an illustrative case. The parish is in the gift of the Hulme trustees, who have many livings and much wealth. The population is about 8000; and for the spiritual wants of the parish one church and one clergyman are altogether inadequate. Now the patrons are to some extent *ex officio* bound to remedy this state of things.

The above suggestions are made in the best interests of the Church herself, whose true and wisest policy must be that of increased and extended efficiency. Half measures and mere tinkering are to be deprecated; and while legislation for particular and isolated cases is good to the extent it goes, what is wanted is a large measure to reform, enlarge, ease, and strengthen the Church extensively. Such a reform is demanded, and is as urgently required as was the amended Reform Law lately passed. Time makes such changes that it is no wonder the arrangements, suitable for one period, should not have remained so through several successive ages; that which requires no amendment as regards principle will necessarily require rectification from time to time in its working and details; and surely he would be no profane meddler with sacred things, but a veritable benefactor, who, recognising

that the Church arrangements are become unsuitable and inadequate, would rectify the grave parochial anomalies which prevail throughout the country, and secure an adjustment and better distribution of clergy and revenues, especially as this can be done without any trenching on any real rights.

Lest apprehension should be caused that he entertains Radical views, the writer has so far withheld a suggestion which he feels should be brought forward. He therefore submits that were a small portion of the income of rich rural parishes with small populations to be appropriated to the endowment of the parishes of the neighbouring town, which has caused the land of those rural and quasi-suburban parishes to rise so greatly in value, that even such an interference would accord with the spirit of religious endowments, and ought to be thankfully accepted; the consent of private patrons might often be obtained, and then no one could object. The living of Houghton-le-Skerne may be cited as an illustrative case. It has itself a population of 1000 and income of perhaps 1500*l.*, and it borders on Darlington, with a population of 15,600, and the ecclesiastical income for all the parishes in the town, until just recently, was only 600*l.* a year.

The dioceses of our bishops have been re-arranged and their incomes adjusted; and no valid reason exists to prevent the parochial landmarks and en-

dowments being taken in hand in their turn. Surely the Church of England is not to abide as she is, without even attempting to adjust flagrant abuses which need but moderate measures to abolish for ever.

§ 8. The clergy of the Church of England, while uniting with millions of their parishioners in loyal affection to the Church, and in blessing her, as affording to the people the means of salvation here and hereafter, and being the chief fountain from whence pure religion and sound morals flow forth and spread over the land, freely allow and fully acknowledge that she is not free from faults and imperfections, and they would thankfully accept any measure framed to bring about needful reforms. At the present time there seems a special call and opportunity for Parliament to give its attention to the whole subject of Church Reform.

Our leading statesmen and cabinet ministers ought to be strongly and awfully impressed with the idea that they act in trust, and that they are to account for their power and conduct in their trust to the One great Master, Founder, and Head of the Church.

The interests of the national Church are not those of any sect or party exclusively, but those of the nation universally—Nonconformist and Churchman alike. That an old and small country like ours should be so far in advance of most other nations in enlightenment and power and prosperity is owing to the blessing of God and the admirable character of our



ancient institutions, which, in great measure, make the spirit of the nation. In other countries a retarding and prejudicial influence has been exerted by the priests. But not so in England. The national Church has proclaimed the right and responsibility of private<sup>1</sup> judgment; has declared it essential that every doctrine have for its warrant a Scripture basis; and has preached the Gospel. Invaluable service has been done by the Church's instrumentality; it is chiefly owing to her ministers that the religion, morals, liberty, and education of the nation are what they are :

“Our Church, where English steeples rise, where English navies  
    roam,  
Sends bold evangelists abroad, gives pastors true at home ;  
And the open Book is in her hand, and to her alone is given  
To brighten earth around our path, while she guides our souls  
    to heaven.  
You may trace her spirit in the looks of each English passer-  
    by,  
In the manly step and the hearty voice, the calm and dauntless  
    eye ;  
In the speech of man and maiden, in the face of age and youth,  
You may read a people *trained by her* in the light and love of  
    Truth.”

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<sup>1</sup> Article xx. in no way conflicts with this liberty. There is a difference between the inherent power (*potestas*) of kings and the lawful authority (*authoritas*) of the Church. Our Church has a similar position to that of a *parent*. She claims the right to rule controversies and questions as to the faith arising amongst her children, but only by a proper and just *influence*; not as though she possessed kingly power, or an infallible and unquestionable authority.

Hitherto it has been the peculiar glory of English public men, to *whatever political party they belonged*, to appeal to history, and to be unanimous in the desire to link together the present and the past in the bonds of an always young, because an always growing Constitution. The patriotism of both the Liberal and Tory party leads them to a proper reverence for the history of their country, and a pride and pleasure in upholding every institution of proved value.

By means of cited examples Lord Lyttelton has shown that formerly the good Whig was the good Churchman, and the old Whig of yesterday is the moderate Liberal of to-day, and so a House of Commons' vote for the Church need not to be only and wholly a Conservative vote, and will not be ; whatever the measure proposed may be, it will go on its merits as regards moderate Liberals ; of course, from the Radicals no favour can be expected. Nothing is venerated, nothing is held sacred by *that* party ; destruction is its congenial work, the axe and the grubber its favourite instruments. Mr. Canning, the great statesman, an amusing fellow, once told a story here *very apropos*. Wishing to describe the English country gentleman's or yeoman's instinct and well-known character, he said, that no sooner has a friend come to visit him than immediately the challenge is made, Let us go and *kill* something.

So long as there is anything of worth to root up,

the true Radical spirit is impatient till it is rooted up. It brooks no hindrance, it feels no remorse, it fears no ill consequence, it will never be satisfied till it can "improve" off the face of the earth and create a blank in place of great beauty. Our—

"Woodman, spare that tree,"

is declared to be the cry of "timidity," "profound ignorance," "stolid resistance to progress,"—according to Mr. Bright. That gentleman, trying to account for the great Conservative reaction in the country, thus addressed four hundred delegates at Birmingham :

"We forgot that all the land over almost all the country is in the hands of persons with interests different from ours. We forgot that the Church, which is established, as you know, in every parish, is also always on the side of the Tory party ; and that wherever a new church is built, be it in town or be it in any county in England or Wales, that church is not the disseminator of political light, but of political darkness, and from it there comes no trace of anything that is found to be Liberal in representation or parliamentary action, but entirely the contrary. And the Church is now certain of being the centre for the propagation of the Tory principles."

Our instinct of self-preservation forces us to hold different views, and to feel different interests from those who look up to Mr. Bright as their leader. But why should that gentleman specify landlords, farmers, and the Church as the only enemies to what he terms *progress*, when a town like Sheffield, Birmingham's *alter ego*, is not prepared for the kind of "progress" the Birmingham school so cordially approves. Shef-

field (we have not forgotten, and Mr. Bright must know) offered "stolid resistance" to Mr. Chamberlain, a great pet of the school of which we speak.

In respect of the advocates of free land, free Church, free schools, Earl Russell, a veteran in the Liberal camp, has a claim to be heard. Earl Russell speaks thus amusingly in his new book of *Recollections, etc., of his Life*:

"Mr. Chamberlain, who is a leading apostle of this school, reminds me, with his notions of progress, of Tony Lumpkin, in the play of *She Stoops to Conquer*. I will copy part of the dialogue from that play, in which Tony Lumpkin and his mother represent tolerably well Mr. Chamberlain and John Bull. When asked to describe his journey Tony answers:

"*Tony*: You shall hear. I first took them down Featherbed-lane, where we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of Up-and-down Hill. I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavytrees Heath; and from that, with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horsepond at the bottom of the garden.

"*Hast.*: But no accident, I hope?

"*Tony*: No, no, only mother is confoundedly frightened."

"So in this case, no harm, no accident has happened, but John Bull was 'confoundedly frightened.' In fact, he has been more frightened than hurt by the threats of the advanced Liberals. Mr. Chamberlain was left at Sheffield at the bottom of the poll. Mr. Roebuck and Mr. Mundella have been triumphantly returned."

The present time is one of such critical importance as regards politics, that I must digress a little from my subject to notice Mr. Bright's charge as to Church clergy being disseminators of political views, and

churches centres of political darkness, because, forsooth, those views are opposed to those of the Birmingham type. Mr. Bright has insinuated, if he has not asserted, that the clergy are ardent politicians, and that their congregations are all "Tories;" the former of these assertions is as unfounded as the latter; Mr. Bright knows Dissenting ministers make their chapels political centres, and he supposes the clergy do the same. But is this really the case? There has been a remarkable crossing of principles and practice on the part of the clergy and Dissenting ministers. Clergymen belong to a Church which professes that religion ought to have a great deal to do with politics, that all politics ought to be leavened with the truths and lessons of religion, and that every citizen ought to be guided by the doctrines and principles of the Gospel on the highest public occasions; yet clergymen, as a class, have always abstained from taking part in politics, and many of them even from voting at contested elections. In so doing they have shrunk from one part of their plain duty to fulfil their obligations as citizens, and even to instruct their people upon the bearing of religious truths on great social questions. On the other hand, those whose principle it is that religion has nothing to do with politics are the very men who have thrown themselves heart and soul into every political question; have canvassed their own congregations, and done everything they could to

throw their weight into one scale, as if they had utterly forgotten the principles they professed to maintain; while hundreds of Nonconformist ministers systematically make their chapels political centres. There is a general consent among the clergy to abstain from introducing politics into the pulpit; even the vital question of the existence of the Church as a national institution is hardly sufficient to arouse them to a true view of duty in this matter.

Mr. Disraeli has always regarded the union of Church and State as of first importance to the country. Ten or twelve years ago he expressed his opinion that the public recognition of the nationality of the Church afforded her a great advantage in being faithful to her trust and asserting her nationality, and he considered the Church to be called upon to make a great effort in this direction.

“The wisest course for the clergy and laity in this matter (as in regard to all other cases in which a great duty is involved), is to be courageous, and endeavour to perform their duty. Then I am confident that this Church of England will show to the world that she has powers of renovation which have not been suspected by some. For my own part, I uphold her, not merely because she is the sanctuary of Divine truth, but because I verily believe she is our best security for that civil and religious liberty of which we hear so much, and which we are told is opposed to her institution.”

Knowing the Premier's views, we entertain a hope that the present Government, irrespective of party

feeling, deaf to calumny and wrong-headed argument, and regardless of every hindrance, will determine to act with respect to the Church for the good of the nation as a whole. And if it should thus determine, it would be sustained by the nation's will and enthroned on the nation's devoted affection. A great difference exists between the real statesman and the pretender, which consists in this, that the one sees into the future, while the other regards only the present ; the one lives by the day and acts on expediency, the other acts on enduring principles and for immortality. If, acting wisely and justly, courageously yet cautiously, the present Parliament would pass a comprehensive first-class measure, it would be true to its profession of progress in the ancient paths, and would certainly gain for itself praise as great and lasting as would be the good thus achieved for the country. The present time seems eminently propitious for such a measure to be brought forward and passed into law, the House of Commons being disposed to give fair play to any honest and reasonable plans for helping the Church to discharge her mission, and the Government apparently very willing to distinguish itself by aiding in the legitimate development of that national, ancient, and most valuable institution.

The subject of patronage cannot properly be dismissed without direct allusion (1) to the men who now are holding, and (2) to those who some day are to be

holders of our benefices, and (3) to those by whose hands they are first qualified for this.

(1) Mr. Bright has pointed to and dwelt upon a great source of danger to the Church, viz. the increased boldness and license of the Ritualist party. This acknowledged evil is very serious, and very difficult to extirpate, but it need not be exaggerated. As for the few Ritualists whose zeal and feminine feeling lead to unwearied efforts to fascinate people with flowers and music, shows and ceremonies, and all the beauty and splendour of a gorgeous Ritualism, their diletterantism would be comparatively harmless (that is to say, chapels in the neighbourhood of such churches would not necessarily be crowded by simple folk, *who*, as they tell us, *want nothing of religion but religion*), were it not accompanied by doctrines of pernicious or hardly intelligible, semi-Roman teaching, instinctively disliked and often resented by ordinary Church-goers. For the demonstrative few whose aim is to restore pre-Reformation dresses, erroneous doctrine and priestly pretensions, there are many thousands of clergy who are in entire sympathy with the Reformers' work and doctrines, and so in harmony with the strong national feeling in this matter. Their teaching is of the old robust Evangelical sort, and their great wish is to foster and hand down to future ages a pure simple Evangelical faith in doctrine, in ordinances, and in worship.

This class of clergy, while they are most numerous,



are also most orderly in their adherence to rubrics, and most law-abiding and deferential to their ordinary's and other judicial authority. Such clergy fully sympathise with the spirit of the following utterance by the Archbishop of Canterbury, at the Maidstone Conference :

“Whatever the law of this Church and realm decides finally to be the proper thing to be done, that we are quite ready to do. I do hope and trust that an exaggerated mode of viewing questions that ought to be looked at calmly will disappear from amongst us. There ever has been, and to the end of the world there ever will be, diversities of opinion, but there are also united ideas of love towards our Lord and Saviour, and the souls for which He died. Knowing there ever have been amongst us diversities of opinion, let us still see that there is no sacrifice of principle, and loyally determine to obey the decisions of the highest tribunal, whatever they may be.”

The writer holds that simple rubrical loyalty is specially agreeable to Protestant clergymen, and that by bringing the Church system in all its ramifications to bear on their parishes, they will organically protestantise them. “It may seem paradoxical to surface thinking men,” says Mr. Crickmer, of Beverley Minster, “but if I had to furnish a Protestant ‘trophy’ like the trophies of the loom or the potter’s wheel in the industrial exhibitions, I should not set up its doughtiest champions such as our Moores, McNeiles, and Ryles, but I should rather set up such as are, or were, friends of the Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University

of Oxford. Those who read thoughtfully the *Apologia* of Newman, and the *Life of Keble*, will understand the deep truth of what I say. Never before I heard these memoirs did I know how mighty was the spell exercised over the heart, conscience, and spirit, of the truly godly, however in error, by the Protestantism of our English Reformed Church. The hold on such men has been almost cruel in its mercilessness of logic and Scriptural truth, or the yells of Protestants and their missiles had long ago driven away any but such as the inexorable pillory of principle held in its grip. What a lesson does this teach of the power of organic over nebulous Protestantism. Therefore, in every way, whether by adopting improvement in the manner of conducting our services or in any other way, let our one aim, who have been called to minister for God as clergymen of the English Church, be, to render the grand word 'Protestant' once again noble and respected in this England of ours—at least in the eyes of the thoughtful, discriminating, and pious. Protestantism was the very warp and woof of the piety of a Latimer, a Ken, a Beveridge, and a Hooker; and yet how beautifully they set us the example, in their own day and generation, of 'walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.' When these English Protestant Churchmen and pastors looked upward to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls; their faces shone like the face of an angel;

when they looked upon their flocks, sheep and lambs, clustered round them, and when they turned to face the wolf, it was with no 'hireling,' harmless, fruitless, frown or voice, which feared that bold trenchant 'earnest contending for the faith' might bring upon them the charge of uncharitableness or combativeness." The writer strongly deprecates departure from the symmetry of Church order. He thinks that good has sprung out of evil, if the excess of the Ritualists' mode of worship, or the baldness of Dissenters', has rallied all true Christians in the Church, of different non-essential views hitherto, round her Church system in the new enthusiasm of a revived filial love, and in the realisation of our vows to a reverent obedience.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has given the clergy seasonable advice in the following words :

"I should greatly regret, and every true friend of the Church would also greatly regret, if the clergy were to become a separate caste. In one sense the clergy must always appear as a separate caste, for, moving as they do in ordinary society, they must ever bear in their minds the stamp of Him Whose ministers they are, and remember that in one sense they are a caste devoted to His cause. But in the other sense, of an isolated caste, which associates only with those persons who are members of the same, but has no understanding of the feelings of those who are without the privileged clique, in that sense it would be destruction if the clergy were to become a caste. We all know that there is a tendency, when men are particularly busy, or associated in one object, to associate only with those whose pursuit is identical with their own ; but my advice to the clergy

and to the laity is, that there should be as little of this exclusiveness as possible ; that they should understand one another, and work together for the great cause they all have at heart. If a clergyman only associates with clergymen, that is a serious evil, of course ; but still worse is it if a clergyman should associate only with those clergymen who are of his own particular school of opinion. He then comes to hold that the truth is not to be found outside of his own narrow circle. I hope the clergy will meet with other clergy who differ with them. It is only by a free interchange of opinion that a more charitable spirit can be maintained. Moreover, I hope that the clergy will try also to understand the feelings of those who are outside their own communion. Ours is a national Church, and the work of our clergy is therefore a national work. We have a national mission here in England, and it is a notorious fact that a large section of the nation does not belong to our communion, therefore we shall not fulfil our mission aright if we do not seek to understand and appreciate the feelings, not only of our own people, but also of those who are separated from us."

(2) A word or two with reference to *the future holders* of our benefices and parish clergy ; it would be well, as far as possible, both to secure their efficiency and to prevent extravagancies.

For this end young men should be required to have some years' standing before they are beneficed, that is, before the Church treats them as fit for a life-long and very responsible charge.

The object which it is thought may be gained by conceding to a congregation the power of vetoing an appointment, the writer believes, would be more surely gained by requiring of the clergyman, before his institution, that he satisfy his bishop, by means of the

majority of clergy of the rural deanery where he has lived, as to his piety, his preaching ability, and indeed his general professional fitness.

The first stage by which alone a qualification can be acquired for a spiritual charge is that where most precaution is needed ; after giving the spiritual office it is quite too late to bar the entry upon a spiritual charge. For when an unfit man succeeds here, so long as he lives he is an incubus on the Church, and an injury to society. It is plain, therefore, that the first tests cannot be too stringent.

To save the Church from the cumbrance of men unsound Protestants,<sup>1</sup> and from men otherwise unfit, it should be obligatory for a deacon to be under the eye of three seniors required to report his conduct periodically to his bishop. Perhaps twenty-three years is more than need be, and that twenty-one would suffice for deacon's orders. And then twenty-six years should be fixed as the age for priests' ordination ; the intermediate five years would develop and discover the fitness of the deacon to the bishop, so as to justify him in accepting or rejecting his application for full orders.

(3) Notwithstanding the power of the patrons, to whose hands the welfare and popularity of the Church to a very great extent is committed, for they can

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<sup>1</sup> In view of the Church of Rome's corruptions, and pretensions in England, the position of the Anglican Church is plainly Protestant.

appoint a man so gifted with common sense and Christian grace as to win the esteem and work upon the hearts of all in the parish, and prove himself its greatest blessing; or the patron's nominee may be one whose conduct and words will irritate and alienate the parishioners until at last everybody has left the church for the chapel; notwithstanding also that we are dependent upon God to move the hearts of right men to enter upon this work, it is *the bishop*—the special “guardian of the spiritualities” of all our parishes, who has the most extensive and definite power in his hands. If he thinks fit he can quite close the gate of admission against every candidate unfit for the ministry. Undoubtedly public opinion, the moral support of all loyal Churchmen and good Christians, would countenance and uphold the bishops if they exercised this prerogative more frequently than they usually do.

An unfounded statement recently made by the Duke of Richmond in the House of Lords is much to be regretted. The Duke said that “by the system of the Church of England talent could be dispensed with.” What could justify such a strange statement? Such an assertion deserves and requires to be indignantly denied. In the present day it is not true, if ever it was true. The Church cannot be a blessing to the nation, nor in a safe state herself, if her ministers should cease to command the respect of the

laity, and prove themselves unequal to lead and influence them. So necessity exists for the clergyman to be a gentleman having original talent, or at least trained and acquired ability. The fool of the family can no longer find in the Church a fitting place. In the past the want of speaking ability and theological knowledge has been to the Church the cause of untold disaster. The writer cannot but think that most of the multitudes of chapels throughout the kingdom were built in the first place through the incompetence and unfeeling carelessness of a past generation of clergy, rather than from disagreement on the part of those who built them with our Church doctrine and organisation.

The true way, the way by which alone our Reformed Church will maintain her ground for the future, and justify her *raison d'être*, is for both bishops and patrons to pledge each other to an unwritten concordat, resolving that none should hold her offices who are not sound as regards belief in and love for the truths which formed the doctrinal basis of the Reformation, or who are disqualified from lack of speaking and thinking ability. Let such a compact be adhered to, the result will be soon apparent; great prosperity will result; "God will bless us and send us prosperity," till our Zion is a theme for admiration through all the land.

## ADDENDUM

SINCE the foregoing pages were in type, I have met with the arguments which led to the passing of an Act of Parliament to divide the old parish of Manchester, and *distribute its funds*. This Act was probably the first coercive measure of late years, and is of the kind which I hope to see extended and made general.

As regards the clergy affected, nothing could be more just, and as regards the parishioners, nothing could be more wise or beneficial than that enactment, by which the income of the collegiate church was spread over the whole of the old parish. The arguments used being applicable *mutatis mutandis* to many other cases, it may not be irrelevant to give a concise summary of them. (1) The principle contended for was held to affect "the interests of hundreds of thousands of souls." (2) It was shown that it was held requisite both by the canon and *civil law* that vicarages *at the time of their foundation* should receive a competent endowment from the holders of the Rectory; and further, that the responsibility of the rectors did not end here. For if from change of circumstances, whether referable to a



diminution in the value of the stipend or property assigned, on the one hand, or to an increase in the requirements of the parish on the other hand, the endowment was no longer sufficient, i.e. if the vicar had not enough to support the calls of charity, or to provide himself with assistant ministers or curates, to attend to the charge of a population become too numerous for his own supervision—the bishop, it was argued, *was* empowered to compel the Rectors to increase the vicarage endowment accordingly. (3) The case of Manchester rectory was complicated by the provisions of Royal Charters, which had constituted the Church into a Collegiate parish Church of the class termed *Ecclesiæ Colligiatae et curatae*, because upon the clergy of such churches was devolved the cure of the souls of the parishioners, as well as the serving of the Church. It was argued that even in ordinary cases, where a benefice was united to an ecclesiastical corporation for the purpose of discharging the duties of the incumbency, the allowance in the first instance of such an appropriation of the endowment was certainly never intended to sanction the spoliation of the parish, rather there is evidence that the idea of those uniting it was that thus they furnished the best security for the due application of the endowments to their proper objects. In this special case, this intention could not be questioned.

The above considerations prevailed with the Legis-

lature to enforce the claims of about forty Manchester clergy.

There *is* a due application of Rectory endowments in all cases where *the cure of all* the souls of a parish is effected, the importance of which end now leads to our disuniting or rather detaching populous districts from the mother church ; and Parliament, which gives Her Majesty in Council this power, also authorises in a timid conditional manner<sup>1</sup> the Privy Council to assign a portion (not a proportionate share) of the glebe land, etc., to a detached parish. It is needless to say this permissive and restricted power is rarely, if ever, used in behalf of new district churches ; therefore the incumbent rectors, *contrary to the original donor's intention*, can and do retain the entire endowment of their parish, whilst a great part of the work is transferred to others, who seek the allowance and enforcement of their just claims.<sup>2</sup>

The curious petition, through which the *first* great reform was effected for Manchester parish (a body of nine clergy being substituted by it for an inefficient and absentee rector), would apply to other old parishes in modern times.<sup>3</sup> I cannot help quoting it.

The petitioners stated :

“That the Church of Manchester having a large and very populous parish, had in time past been *ruled* (*regi et gubernari*) by rectors who rarely had cared to reside personally in the same,

<sup>1</sup> See 1 & 2 Vict. c. 106 § 23.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 75.

but who caused the service of the Church on which a great and weighty cure of souls had rested, and still did rest, to be administered by stipendiary chaplains, while they themselves applied, according to their own pleasure, the fruits and offerings of the Church to their own use ; from whose long absence there ensued neglect of the cure of souls, diminution of divine worship, a defrauding of hospitality and of the relief of the poor, and great peril of souls. Recalling to memory [we are then told], and with the mind's eye beholding these long and continued misfortunes of the Church and its parishioners, they desired as far as with God's help they could, to provide suitable remedies against the recurrence of these neglects, defects, and mischiefs, and to secure a reformation of the premises."

In their concluding prayer, the petitioners

"besought the bishop with no moderate importunity that, considering what had been premised, and considering further that the annual revenues and offerings of the church amounted to upwards of two hundred and fifty marks, a sum sufficient to support a larger number of persons to be employed in the service of God" than a single rector, the necessary steps be taken to effect this their desire and prayer.

The writer will be obliged by information of cases of districts being detached from rich parishes, without sharing in the endowment. He wishes to tabulate such cases in a future publication.

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